"Every language is an old-growth forest of the mind, a watershed of thought, an ecosystem of spiritual possibilities"

- Wade Davis (2005)

University of Alberta

Reserves and Resources: Local Rhetoric on Land, Language, and Identity amongst the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree First Nations

by

Christine Elizabeth Schreyer

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Anthropology

©Christine Elizabeth Schreyer
Fall 2009
Edmonton, Alberta

Permission is hereby granted to the University of Alberta Libraries to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only. Where the thesis is converted to, or otherwise made available in digital form, the University of Alberta will advise potential users of the thesis of these terms.

The author reserves all other publication and other rights in association with the copyright in the thesis and, except as herein before provided, neither the thesis nor any substantial portion thereof may be printed or otherwise reproduced in any material form whatsoever without the author's prior written permission.

Library and Archives Canada

Published Heritage Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque et Archives Canada

Direction du Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file *Votre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-51250-0
Our file *Notre référence*

NOTICE:
The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:
L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

Canada

Examining Committee

Michelle Daveluy, Anthropology

Andie Palmer, Anthropology

Chris Fletcher, Anthropology

Lisa Philips, Anthropology

Ellen Bielawski, Native Studies

Phyllis Morrow, Anthropology, University of Alaska Fairbanks

Dedicated to:
The memory of Antonia Jack, *Kookhittaan* Elder, Taku River Tlingit First Nation
And the members of the Taku River Tlingit and Loon River Cree First Nations,
who are working to keep their languages alive and flourishing

Reserves and Resources:
Local Rhetoric of Language, Land, and Identity
amongst the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree First Nations

Abstract

This dissertation compares and contrasts aboriginal language planning within Canada at both the national and local scale. In 2005, the Aboriginal Languages Task Force released their foundational report which entailed "a national strategy to preserve, revitalize, and promote [Aboriginal] languages and cultures" (2005: 1); however, discrepancies exist between their proposed strategies and the strategies employed locally by the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, located in Atlin, British Columbia, and the Loon River Cree First Nation, located in Loon Lake, Alberta. Using data collected during ethnographic fieldwork with each First Nation between 2005 and 2008, I provide a rationale for these discrepancies and propose reasons why the national strategy has, as of 2008, been unsuccessful. Both national and local strategies have focused on the relationship between land and language and its role in language planning. National language planning rhetoric has also utilized the concept of nationhood. However, both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree use the concept of nationhood in conjunction with assertions of sovereignty over land and, therefore, situate their language planning *within* land planning. Throughout my research, I have been involved in volunteer language projects for each of the communities. These have included creating a Tlingit language board game entitled *"Haa shagóon ítx yaa ntoo.aat"* (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths) and Cree language storybooks entitled *Na mokatch poni âchimon* (I will never quit telling stories). Both of these

projects connect land use and language use and can be seen as part of local language planning strategies. Finally, the Aboriginal Languages Task Force uses the concept of "language as a right" within their national language planning strategies; however, the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree have instead utilized a "language as resource" ideology (Ruiz, 1984). I argue that the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Loon River Cree First Nation use "language as a resource" rhetoric due to their ideologies of land *stewardship* over Euro-Canadian models of land *ownership* and I argue that language planning can not stand on its own – separated from the historical, political, economic, social, and cultural considerations that a community faces.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank those individuals without whom this research would not have been possible.

First, to Louise Gordon and her family, who became my Tlingit family during my stays in Taku River Tlingit territory, I would like to say *aa tlein gunalchéesh*. I will be forever grateful for your friendship and honoured that you have included me in your lives in many different ways. To Louise, Nicole, Ali, Lorraine, Val, Randy, Sandra, Wayne, and Andy Williams, *gunalchéesh* for taking the time to talk with me and helping me to learn more about Tlingit language and the land. Finally, to the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, and especially the members of the *T'aahku Kwaan* Dancers, *gunalchéesh* for including me in your lives. I have learnt so much from you and will always remember it.

I am also extremely grateful to Richard Davis, Eva Whitehead, Kenny Ward, Laverne Letendre, and Barry Hochstein (the members of the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Team at Loon River Cree First Nation), and would like to say *merci* for including me in your work and teaching me about your land and way of life. To Mayble Noskey, Arthur Noskey, Jerry Noskey, and Kenny Ward, *merci* for taking the time to talk to me and helping me learn more about the Loon River Cree and *nehiyawewin*. I appreciate your kindnesses.

To my amazing husband, Ryan, I will be forever grateful for your support during all aspects of *this* research and research to come. Thank you for worrying so I wouldn't have to and for always being there - literally and figuratively. To my parents, Randy and Donna Schreyer, and my parents-in-law, Rudi and Myrna Klassen, thank you for your continued support of my studies and your encouragement throughout.

I would also like to show my appreciation and thanks to Sheila Greer for her always thoughtful comments and inspiring ideas early on in my research.

To my wonderful fellow graduate students – Aaron, Carly, Clint, Connie, Gabriel, Janine, Jenanne, Jodie, Mindy, Tanya, and Vicky – thank-you for all your friendship, support, encouragement and fun times. I miss you already!

To my examining committee members – Andie Palmer, Chris Fletcher, Lisa Philips, Ray LeBlanc, Ellen Bielawski, and Phyllis Morrow, my thanks for your thought-provoking questions, guidance, and interest in this work. And, finally, to my supervisor-extraordinaire, Michelle Daveluy, thank you for your continued support and encouragement. I will always be grateful for your advice (whilst I was near and far) and friendship, and hope that we will continue to work together in the future.

I also wish to acknowledge the financial support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarships, Doctoral), the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Scholarship and the Walter H. Johns Graduate Fellowship), the Canadian Anthropology Society (CASCA – Richard F. Salisbury Award), the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (Northern Scientific Training Program), the Canadian Circumpolar Institute (C-BAR Grant), the Department of Anthropology at the University of Alberta (PhD Recruitment Scholarship), the Graduate Student's Association of the University of Alberta and the Faculty of Arts (Travel Awards).

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Towards a New Beginning? 1
- Introduction: Research Questions 1
- Theoretical Background: Social Identity, Language, and Land Claims 5
- Taku River Tlingit First Nation Background 11
- The Tlingit Language Context 18
- Loon River Cree First Nation Background 20
- The Cree Language Context 29
- National and Local Aboriginal Language Planning Strategies 31
  - *Land* 31
  - *Nation* 36
  - *Language Rights* 41
- Organization of Articles 46
- References Cited 52

Chapter Two: "*Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres*": Un projet de revitalisation linguistique par le jeu 59
(Schreyer and Gordon, 2007)
- Introduction 59
- La Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River (PNTTR) 61
- Sur les traces des ancêtres pour, *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres* 65
- Jeux et divertissement dans l'apprentissage des langues 77
- La pertinence dans l'acquisition linquistique 81
- Conclusion 85
- References Cited 87

Chapter Three: "Nehiyawewin Askîhk" – Cree Language on the Land: Language Planning Through Consultation in the Loon River Cree First Nation 90
(Schreyer, 2008)
- Introduction 90
- Canadian National Aboriginal Language Strategies 93
- The Language and Land Interface 96
- "Language as Resource" and Language Planning 99
- Loon River Cree First Nation 102
- Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study 106
- Loon River's Consultation Unit 109
- Language Planning through Consultation 112
- Conclusion 122
- References Cited 125

Chapter Four: Negotiating Language on Negotiated Land 131
(Schreyer, To Appear)
- Introduction 131
- Land Claims and Language 133

Community-Internal Land and Language Advocacy 137
Anohch ekwa Ekospîhk (Now and Then) and the Loon River Cree 141
Na mokatch nika poni âchimon (I will never quit telling stories) 148
Ha Tlatki Ha Kustiyi (Our Land – Our Way of Life) and the Taku River Tlingit 153
"Haa shagóon ítx yaa ntoo.aat" (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths) 163
Performatives of Social Action and Identity 169
Conclusion 173
References Cited 177

Chapter Five: Directness and Indirectness: Local Language Planning amongst the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree 184
Introduction 184
Now, Then, and Cree Indirectness in Communication 186
As the crow flies, the clans speak – Directness in Tlingit Communication 199
Domains of Use - Reconnecting Language and Land 206
Acquisition Planning – Local versus National Language Planning 214
Concluding Remarks 216
References Cited 223

Appendix: *"Haa shagóon ítx yaa ntoo.aat"* (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths): Fun and Games in Language Revitalization 227
(Schreyer and Gordon, 2007)
Introduction 227
The Taku River Tlingit First Nation 229
Tracing the ancestors' footsteps while "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths" 233
Games and Enjoyment in Language Learning 242
Relevance in Language Learning 246
Conclusion 250
References Cited 251

List of Figures

Figure 1: Hunting at Blue Canyon, BC 17
Figure 2: Loon River Cree Site Visit, Loon Lake, AB 29
Figure 3: Loon River Cree First Nation band office sign 40
Figure 4: Madame Antonia Jack à la boutique Inside Passage Arts 68
Figure 5: Enfants tlingits de Taku River jouant à *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres* 74
Figure 6: Taku River Tlingit Welcome Sign at Como Lake, BC 156
Figure 7: Taku River Tlingit Welcome Signs at Como Lake, BC 157
Figure 8: *K'iyán* Sign on the Atlin Road, BC 161

Chapter One: Towards a New Beginning?

Introduction: Research Questions

Within Canada, land claims have been at the forefront of political and economic considerations for Aboriginal[1] peoples for the past thirty years[2]. I argue, therefore, that any discussion of Aboriginal language planning in Canada would be unproductive if land claims are not taken into account. Daveluy has written that for Canada's Aboriginal peoples "language issues were for a long time…subordinated to land and jurisdictional claims" (2004: 84); and provides examples of the language policies in Northern Quebec as a counterexample to this trend. In my research with two Canadian First Nations I have found that language issues and land issues are often merged together. The two communities that I have collaborated with are the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, located in Atlin, British Columbia, and the Loon River Cree First Nation, located in Loon Lake, Alberta. When approached as possible research partners, both communities initiated and actively participated in collaborative language maintenance and revitalization projects for their communities, and this illustrates that their native languages are priorities for them. Also, each of the communities have experience negotiating for their rights to their traditional lands. My hypothesis, then, was that active community participation in land issues leads to an awareness of other issues, particularly

[1] The term Aboriginal (as is the practice in Canada) is inclusive of all of the indigenous peoples of Canada including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. The term Indigenous, when it is used, will refer to those peoples who are original inhabitants of a particular land. The term First Nation is inclusive of groups previously known as Indians, and most individuals identify themselves as belonging to a specific First Nation.

[2] In 1973, the *Calder* decision in which three of the seven Supreme Court judges declared that the Nisga'a retained Aboriginal Title to the land prompted the Canadian Federal Government to begin land claims negotiations with Aboriginal Peoples across Canada.

language use. My research has supported this hypothesis, and my findings will be discussed at length in the following pages.

May (2005) describes the subaltern status of Native American[3] languages in the United States, and writes that "…linguistic dislocation for a particular community of speakers seldom, if ever, occurs in isolation from socio-cultural and socio-economic dislocation as well" (2005:325). Patrick, who has also examined the linguistic practices of the Inuit in Northern Quebec, writes of the "need to link macro-historical (legal, political, discursive) frameworks to the micro-level of sociolinguistic practice" (2005: 385). Land claims are one of the major factors that have influenced Aboriginal political status within Canada as land management is one way that Aboriginal communities can garner greater political autonomy. Therefore, they are a part of the macro-historical frameworks that must be taken into account when considering language ideologies and language use within Aboriginal communities. The relationship between Indigenous peoples and the land has long been a focus of study within Anthropology (cf. Speck, 1915; Goldschmidt and Haas, 1946; Leacock, 1954; Rogers, 1963; Rosaldo, 1980; Morantz, 1986; Cruikshank, 1990; Basso, 1996; Thornton, 2003; and Nadasdy, 2003), and my research expands on this relationship to include how this relationship with land has impacted language planning in Aboriginal communities.

In June of 2005, the Aboriginal Languages Task Force released their report entitled *Towards a New Beginning: A foundational report for a strategy*

[3] This is the term May uses to denote First Nations peoples in the United States; the term is also used within Canada to refer to First Nations individuals.

to revitalize First Nation, Inuit, and Métis Languages and Cultures (2005).

The report explains that:

> In December 2002, the Minister of Canadian Heritage announced that Canada would create a centre with a budget of $160 million over ten years to help preserve, revitalize and promote Aboriginal Languages and Cultures (2005: i).

Ten Task Force Members were chosen and they represented the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Métis National Council[4]. The report outlines "a national strategy to preserve, revitalize, and promote First Nation, Inuit, and Métis languages and cultures" (2005: 1), and also emphasizes the relationship Aboriginal languages have to the land from which they originated. The cover page of the executive summary of the report displays a child's drawing of people surrounding a rising sun amidst an expanse of green land and blue sky. The words within the drawing state, "As the sun rises…so should our languages" (Aboriginal Languages Task Force, 2005: cover). The connection between land and language can be seen here as well as within the body of the report which states:

> "The land" is more than the physical landscape; it involves the creatures and plants, as well as the people's historical and spiritual relationship to their territories. First Nation, Inuit, and Métis languages show that the people are not separate from the land. They have a responsibility to protect it and to preserve the sacred and traditional knowledge associated with it (Aboriginal Languages Task Force, 2005: ii).

For the Task Force it is "the oral histories, the songs and the dances that speak of the First Nation, Inuit and Métis connection with this land" (Aboriginal Languages Task Force, 2005: viii). However, despite the fact that the language planning strategies promoted in the Aboriginal Languages Task

[4] These are the national bodies that represent these communities within Canada.

Force (2005) stress the importance of "bottom-up language planning [as] crucial to the success of a national language strategy" (2005:81), the themes of rhetoric used within this report are not completely aligned with the themes of rhetoric and strategies that the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Loon River Cree First Nation employ locally.

Patrick (2005) asserts that in order to fully understand language planning at the community level there needs to be a link between the macro-historical and the micro-level of language use, which will require:

> …more detailed ethnographic investigation of everyday language use – in particular, the way that language varieties are linked to social and cultural practices, local economic activities, and assertions of local power. One place to start on a practical level is to work in collaboration with Indigenous groups and organizations to see what 'bottom-up' initiatives work in particular contexts and which of these initiatives can be fruitfully applied to others (Patrick, 2005: 385).

During my research with the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree, I volunteered on collaborative language projects. In Atlin, I helped to create a Tlingit language board game entitled *"Haa shagóon itx̲ yaa ntoo.aat"* (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths) and in Loon Lake, I worked on developing Cree language storybooks entitled *Na mokatch poni âchimon* (I will never quit telling stories). Both of these projects connect land use and language use and my experiences in collaborating on these projects have allowed me access to the "everyday language use" (as Patrick describes above) that are essential to understanding the micro-language planning in each community (see Liddicoat and Baldauf, 2008). Language planning is connected to language ideology or "self-evident ideas and objectives a group holds concerning roles of language in the social experience of members as they contribute to the expression of the group" (Woolard and Schieffelin, 1994: 57). Language ideology, then, can be

seen to be an important feature of social identity as it is through language that social facts are constructed and shared within a community (Searle, 1995). Within this dissertation, I will argue that land claims are a social fact that have impacted micro-level language use and impacted social identity and language planning within the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Loon River Cree First Nation. This chapter will describe the theoretical background that situates my research, as well as further outlining the connection between social identity, language, and land claims for Canadian Aboriginal peoples. I will also provide background information on the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Tlingit language as well as the Loon River Cree First Nation and the Cree language. I will discuss three themes of rhetoric used in the Aboriginal Languages Task Force report, including land, nation, and language rights and discuss whether or not the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree utilize these as well. Finally, I will provide a summary of the articles included in the body of this dissertation.

Theoretical Background: Social Identity, Language, and Land Claims

My research is based on three interconnected theoretical positions. The first of these is the notion (based on phenomenology) that "sense of place" is an essential part of all human existence; as Escobar so aptly writes, "given the primacy of embodied perception, we always find ourselves in places. We are in short – placelings" (2001: 143). Thornton, in his book *Being and Place among the Tlingit,* states:

> In a fundamental sense the landscape is part of every individual's sense of being, not just that of Tlingits, or Native Americans, or indigenous peoples. Historically – and even in the contemporary age of globalization and generic "non-places" (Auge, 1995) – landscape

> and place have been central to culture in all societies, from the production and maintenance of cultural materials, knowledge, and values, to the formation of individual and group identity (2008:4).

Thornton's description of "sense of place" connects to my second theoretical position, which is that communities socially construct their realities based on shared experiences and memories (Berger and Luckman, 1996). In creating socially constructed realities, a community is in fact defining themselves and creating their identity. Fentress and Wickham argue that communities define themselves in relation to the outside world:

> Perhaps the most powerful element…is the memory of the community in opposition to the outside world, for this is one of the most effective resources any group has to reinforce its own social identity in opposition to that of others, and it is a memory that everyone can participate in, through personal memories and family traditions (1992: 114).

Members of a community participate in creating a community identity through sharing thoughts and memories with others. Language ideologies are often represented in the discourse the community utilizes to perform or share their identity with outsiders. As Schieffelin and Doucet write, "language ideologies are likely places to find images of 'self/other', 'us/them'…" (1994: 177). The Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree perform their social identities based on this us/them distinction, which is based on their connection to their traditional territories (see Chapter Four). According to Cattell and Climo, community identity is never static because of the constant forces both from within the community and from the outside world that affect every individual within a community (Cattell and Climo, 2002). Place, a socially constructed phenomenon, must be articulated from within a community. As Basso notes, "If place-making is a way of constructing the past, a venerable means of *doing*

human history, it is also a way of constructing social traditions and, in the process, personal and social identities. We *are*, in a sense, the place-worlds we imagine" (Basso, 1996: 7, italics in the original).

Both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree invoke the past and their connection to the land in their constructions of their identity. The Loon River Cree social identity is based on their historical relationship to the land as "status Indians" as opposed to Métis peoples. This is in contrast to the Taku River Tlingit, who construct their identity based on their historical connection to the land from "time-immemorial". In Chapter Four, I describe how each of these social identities has developed in response to the land claims process and I argue that land claims have become a fact of life for most, if not all, Aboriginal communities in Canada. Land claims are a politically sensitive topic and this can be seen from the reaction that studies on land claims garner in both non-academic and academic circles where they are often pushed to the side in the interest of other topics, such as the impact of climate change and language endangerment. However, it is exactly because land claims are a part of Aboriginal life in Canada that they must be taken into account when conducting ethnographic inquiries into Aboriginal cultures. Land is an essential element to Aboriginal life, and this can be seen in the findings of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, which was a federally funded commission to determine "what the foundations of a fair and honourable relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people of Canada [are]" (http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/rpt/wrd_e.html). Throughout their reports *land* is seen to be a critical element to many of the categories up for debate. For example:

> Land is absolutely fundamental to Aboriginal identity ... *land is reflected in the language, culture, and spiritual values of all Aboriginal peoples*. Aboriginal concepts of territory, property and tenure, of resource management and ecological knowledge may differ profoundly from those of other Canadians, but they are no less entitled to respect. (Canada, Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, vol. 2 Ottawa: Communication Group, 1996, emphasis added)

My research connects land, social identity, and community discourse, as well as examines the similarities and differences that exist between two contemporary First Nations communities.

This leads to my third theoretical position, which is that language is the most utilized medium of social construction as it is language through which social facts and experiences are shared (Searle, 1995; Potter, 1996), and, therefore, language is closely tied to all aspects of culture and should be part of any ethnographic inquiry. As May (2005) writes:

> ...it is clear that *all* language(s) embody and accomplish both identity and instrumental functions for those who speak them. (May, 2005: 334).

Again, the relationship between embodied experience and identity is evident. Edward Sapir described the role of language in creating "social reality" in his 1929 article entitled "The Status of Linguistics as a Science". Sapir states:

> Though language is not ordinarily thought of as of essential interest to the students of social science, it powerfully conditions all of our thinking about social problems and processes. Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the "real world" is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same *social reality*. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached (Sapir, 1929: 209, emphasis added).

Throughout most of his career, Sapir's research focused on outlining the relationship between language and thought, but here he touches upon the social nature of language. In particular Sapir's comment that, "the worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached" is significant in my research because of the intimate connection Aboriginal peoples have with the land. As the Aboriginal Languages Task Force states:

> The words for 'the land' in our various languages reflect the fact that the land is more than the mere physical landscape comprising the various material elements known to science. The 'land', the 'country', the 'place' – all of these and equivalent terms have an even subtler meaning (Aboriginal Languages Task Force Report, 2005: 22).

My research examines the way 'the land' is an ongoing part of the social reality of the two First Nation communities I am working with and how concepts of the land are expressed in their community discourse and language planning.

Erich Hirsch (1996) writes that place and space are on opposite "poles of notion": place corresponds with "foreground actuality" or the actuality of being, while space corresponds with "background potentiality" or the possibility of existence. In the social construction of place a community will select some aspects of the landscape which they hold in high esteem. The points in the landscape that are chosen are dependent on the community's culture and worldview and these points are shared amongst community members through the incorporation of them into place names, stories, songs, and everyday conversations. These concepts of "background potentiality" and "foreground actuality" can also be seen in terms of language. Giddens has

distinguished between speech and language based on connection to place. Kearns and Berg (2002) have summarized Giddens' distinction. They write:

> Speech… occurs within the particularities of time and place. In this sense, it can be seen as an embodied and emplaced activity: speech literally takes place. Language, on the other hand, is less placebound than speech. It is not the product of any one speaker, but instead it is both a product of, and resource for, a multitude of speakers. Giddens' conceptualization offers an important pointer to the significance of speech in the (re)production of place. (287)

Language, then, is the "background potentiality" for any speech; while speech is part of the "foreground actuality" because it is emplaced and embodied. Basso has illustrated this in his examination of the Western Apache use of language in constructing their social landscapes (1996). He writes:

> Deliberately and otherwise, people are forever presenting each other with culturally mediated images of where and how they dwell. In large ways and small, they are forever *performing acts* that reproduce and express their own sense of place, and also, inextricably, their own understandings of who and what they are (1996:110, emphasis added).

When an individual uses speech (whether written or spoken) in relation to the land, they are embodying their "sense of place" and expressing their identity as part of a community. My dissertation combines these three theoretical positions in order to determine how the land claims process has affected sense of place and the social construction of community identity, and how language is used to "perform" this identity (Austin, 1962; Sullivan, 2006). I will now provide a brief background on the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree, as well as the context of the Tlingit and Cree languages within North America.

Taku River Tlingit First Nation Background

The Taku River Tlingit First Nation is located at 59° 29' 20" latitude and -133° 38' 38" longitude. They have a population of 374 people, 82 of whom live on reserve (INAC, 2008). The Taku River Tlingit First Nation has never surrendered their Aboriginal Title to the land because the federal and provincial governments have never conducted treaty negotiations in their traditional land use area. This means that the land claim they are negotiating falls under the category of a comprehensive claim. Comprehensive claims are defined as those claims that "arise in areas of Canada where Aboriginal land rights have not been dealt with by past treaties or through other legal means" (INAC, 2008). These usually take longer to negotiate because they involve many different factors (such as self-governance, education, health services, and land and resource management) and larger land areas than in a specific claim defined as "claims that deal with past grievances of First Nations related to Canada's obligations under historic treaties or they way it managed First Nations' funds or other assets" (INAC, 2008). In British Columbia, land claims are settled through the British Columbia Treaty Commission in a six stage negotiation process[5]. The Taku River Tlingit First Nation has reached stage four of the treaty process, which is the negotiation of an agreement in principle. Beginning in 1984, the Taku River First Nation started working on collecting information that would support their land claim and negotiations with the government. However, the negotiations between the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the federal and provincial governments came to a stand still due to the lack of government support for the community during

[5] For more information see: http://www.bctreaty.net

their court case against Redfern Resources Ltd. In this court case, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation fought for stewardship over their traditional lands in order to allow for the continuance of their way of life.[6]

Redfern Resources wanted to build a mining road through their territory, which, if constructed, would have caused a huge impact on an otherwise undeveloped large portion of their territory and would have disrupted their traditional way of life.[7] In 1999, the Taku River Tlingit began working with the Round River Organization, a conservation group, in order to develop a sustainable land plan, also known as the Conservation Area Design, to further strengthen their argument for stewardship over their land. They published these documents (the Conservation Area Design and the Vision and Management Document) in 2003. Therefore, as a result of these long battles with government and economic agencies the Taku River Tlingit First Nation has developed a vast Heritage Archive, which includes a variety of documents such as photographs, historical documents, early ethnographies of the region, and extensive interviews with Elders and other community members (some of which have yet to be transcribed). People are constantly transcribing interviews within the band office to further expand the archive, and my research will also be on file there when it is complete.

Since the court case in 2004, and the development of what is known as British Columbia's "new relationship"[8] with Aboriginal Peoples, the Taku

---

[6] For more information on the court case see: Taku River Tlingit First Nation *v.* British Columbia (Project Assessment Director), [2004] 3 S.C.R. 550, 2004 SCC 74

[7] For more information see: Staples, Lindsay (1996) Determining the Impact of the Tulsequah Chief Mine Project on the Traditional Land Use of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation: Addendum on Impacts. A Report Prepared For: Environmental Assessment Office, Province of British Columbia. North/West Resources Consulting Group: Whitehorse, Yukon.

[8] The province of British Columbia states that the "new relationship" involves "the provincial government and B.C. First Nations' organizations…working together to develop a New

River Tlingit have been involved in government to government negotiations on a joint land use planning agreement for the Atlin-Taku area, and the community ratified the framework agreement in March of 2008.[9] This land use plan builds on their Vision and Management document, which was entitled *Hà t_àtgi hà khustìyxh* - Our Land is Our Future (2003), and is occurring outside of the land claims process. The community sees this as beneficial to their goals of stewardship and self-governance. As Sandra Jack, current Spokesperson, told me in our interview, "we all know that land claims are a bit of a sellout to First Nations people and it's a terrible insult to our ancestors for us to say, 'okay we'll take these little pieces of reserve land, all over the place and that will be fine' " (Jack, 2006)[10]. In comparison to land claims, the Atlin-Taku Framework agreement takes into account 5.5 million hectares of land, which makes up Taku River's traditional territory.

Despite the fact that the Taku River Tlingit have not signed a treaty, they do have some reserve lands already allocated to them. Taku Jack was the chief of the Taku River Tlingit during the gold rush, and the town councilors held him in favor (Mitcham, 1993: 92). In her history of the Taku area, Allison Mitcham writes that when the town tried to have the Tlingit reservation moved from Atlin to five miles south of the town Taku Jack protested. According to Mitcham:

> He lost little time applying for a number of pieces of land in the vicinities of both Atlin and Teslin lakes. By 1916 most of the claims

---

Relationship founded on respect, recognition, and reconciliation of Aboriginal Rights and Title". For more information on the "new relationship" see: http://www.em.gov.bc.ca/subwebs/AboriginalAffairs/New-Relationship.htm

[9] For more information see: http://ilmbwww.gov.bc.ca/slrp/lrmp/smithers/atlin_taku/index.html#background

[10] Interviews that I have conducted with community members will appear as, for example, (Jack, 2006). This process was begun in the articles within this dissertation and is maintained here for consistency.

> he had filed on behalf of the Atlin-Teslin Bands had been approved by the Department of Indian Affairs – another indication, one would think, of the regard Taku Jack managed to win from many whites (Mitcham, 1993: 95-96).

These reserves that Taku Jack created are still in existence today. Many of the community members who live in Atlin live on the Five Mile Reserve (described above); however, the band office is located in town, where other community members live on what is known as the "town reserve". The town reserve is called *Wenah*[11] in the Tlingit language (caribou lick), and lies just south of the town of Atlin; it is separated from the town by the remains of a creek that flows into Atlin Lake. Taku River currently have a specific land claim pending over this section of land as they no longer have access to the waterfront. Some community members have also moved outside the community, particularly to Whitehorse in search of employment and economic opportunities. As there is no high school in Atlin many of the Taku River Tlingit high school students relocate to Whitehorse to attend classes. During the summer, community members travel by air and by water to the Taku River, where they have fishing camps. Also, the First Nation has their own salmon business called Taku Wild, which sells smoked salmon around the world (www.takuwild.com), and there are plans to build a smokehouse for the company on the Taku. Currently, the fish is smoked in Alaska, and then sent back to Canada to the Taku River First Nation. The Taku River Tlingit First Nation has also been involved in other ventures recently, including a micro-hydro project with BC Hydro on Surprise Creek, just east of the town of Atlin. They have also purchased a lodge near the Taku River where they

[11] This is the inland orthography for the town name of *Weináa*. For more information on this specific claims see: Taku River Tlingit Wenah specific claim inquiry (2006) Indian Claims Commission.

plan to pursue eco-tourism and cultural activities, including Tlingit immersion camps (Gordon, 2008, personal communication).

On June 25th 2005, I arrived in Whitehorse, Yukon to begin my doctoral research with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. I had been in contact with the community since February of 2005 when I sent a letter to the Council for Yukon First Nations (of whom the Taku River Tlingit First Nation is also a member) offering to conduct a volunteer project for a community in exchange for being able to conduct my doctoral research. Louise Gordon, Lands Director and Wolf Clan Director for the Taku River Tlingit, was the person who received my email from the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. She was interested in creating a Tlingit language board game (one of my ideas from the letter I sent) for the community based on place names that the community had already collected as she had previously been a language teacher and thought that games were important language learning tools. I made arrangements with Louise to stay at her family fish camp, which is also known as the Round Robin Healing Circle camp. I stayed at this camp, almost entirely on my own, for two weeks while I got to know the town of Atlin, the Taku River Tlingit community, and the people I would be working with. The main methodology I utilized was participant observation which I conducted while working in the Lands and Resources department of the band office for the first two weeks, further developing the Taku River Tlingit Place Names Board Game[12], as well as volunteering at the Taku River Tlingit heritage booth at the annual Atlin Arts and Music Festival. I continued to work on the board game for the remaining time of my first summer of fieldwork. Antonia

[12] This was the original name of the game. More information on this game is provided in Chapter Two.

Jack, Louise's grandmother and an elder of the community, and I brought the game to the Taku River summer culture camp on August 4th, 2005, in order to play the game with the children and to get them to practice using Tlingit.[13]

The following spring, I returned to Atlin in March for two weeks in order to plan a longer stay for the upcoming summer. When I arrived I stayed at Louise Gordon's house, and since that time I have become friends with Louise and her family, and always stay with her when I am in Atlin. This has allowed me to meet many more individuals, as well as develop my contacts in the Lands and Resources department of the community, which is the department that came to be most connected to the volunteer project. In order to conduct my research with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, I signed a confidentiality agreement in 2005 and volunteer contracts each year that I worked with them for the following three and a half years.

During my time in the community, I have been fortunate enough to join Taku River's dance group *T'aakhú Kwáan* Dancers at Juneau Celebration in 2006[14], as well as at the Atlin Arts and Music Festival in 2006 and 2007. I have had the privilege of meeting many of the community members, young and old, and working with Mrs. Antonia Jack on the Taku River Tlingit board game. Mrs. Jack passed away in February of 2005, and Louise and I continued to work on the board game in order to have it finished at her one-year memorial potlatch, which I was honoured to attend in June of 2006. I have had the opportunity to go to hunting camp in Blue Canyon with Louise

---

[13] Louise was unable to attend on August 4th, as she had a scheduled meeting in Whitehorse. All three of us were planning to teach the game at the culture camp on August the 2nd, but a bear had ripped the camp apart trying to get food out of the kitchen and our plans were delayed.

[14] Celebration, hosted by the Sealaska Heritage Institute biannually, is a cultural festival where Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian dance groups come to perform from all across Canada and the United States.

and her family. Spending time out on the land, away from town, allowed me to learn more about the importance of being out on the land to the community members (see Figure 1).

Figure One: Christine Schreyer, Nicole Gordon, and
Jack family at Blue Canyon, BC
Photo taken by: Louise Gordon, Fall 2006

The connections I made during my volunteer project also enabled me to conduct interviews with the members of the Lands and Resources Department as well as language and culture teachers and elders. Living with Louise allowed me to experience life in the Taku River community as part of a family. Working in the Lands and Resources department facilitated my understanding of the inner workings of the community's land management vision, including their assertions of sovereignty as part of their community social identity.

The Tlingit Language Context

The Tlingit language is commonly thought to be a language isolate[15]. In both the Tlingit and Cree language situations, certain regular phonological differences, as well as different vocabulary, are taken as significant features in characterizing dialects. There are two major dialects of Tlingit (Inland and Coastal), although they are mutually intelligible (www.yukoncollege.yk.ca) (see Leer, 1991). Within the Yukon, the other Tlingit communities, including the Teslin Tlingit First Nation and the Carcross-Tagish First Nation, also have slight differences in their phonology. Teslin Tlingit First Nation uses the [m] sound in their speech where Atlin speakers use the [w] sound. The Yukon Native Language Centre has worked to preserve the Tlingit language, and their records show that speakers of Tlingit are usually 55 and older, and that no children are currently learning Tlingit as their first language (www.yukoncollege.yk.ca). The Aboriginal Languages Task Force Report (2005) lists Tlingit as a language isolate that is "endangered", and states that as of 1996 there were 145 speakers of Tlingit, and the average age of people who use Tlingit as their home language is 41.6 (Aboriginal Languages Task Force Report, 2005).

However, although no children are currently learning Tlingit at home amongst the Taku River Tlingit, programs have been developed at the Tlingit Family Learning Centre (which is a daycare), the Atlin School, and at the Tlingit Culture Camp, which is where I, with the aid of elder Antonia Jack, introduced the Tlingit place names board game in 2005. There are three Tlingit language teachers associated with the Yukon Native Language Centre,

[15] There has been debate over whether or not Tlingit belongs to the Eyak language family, which is otherwise extinct; see Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer, 1987.

and a few books and teaching materials have been compiled by the centre. Jeff Leer, a linguist with the Alaska Native Language Center, has also collected stories with Mrs. Elizabeth Nyman, an elder from Atlin (Nyman and Leer, 1993). Finally, Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer (1987, 1990, 1994, 1999, 2002), in association with Sealaska Heritage Institute have done extensive work on coastal Tlingit in Alaska, compiling narratives, and working on developing community programs.

Tlingit has had numerous orthographies during its life as a literate language. Russian missionaries in the 19th century were the first people to try to create an orthography for Tlingit from the Cyrillic alphabet (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer, 1987: 39). However, the most popular orthography today (known as the Revised Popular Orthograhy (Crippen, 2007) or the Coastal Orthography) is an adapted version of the orthography created by Constance Naish and Gillian Story (1963), linguists with the Summer Institute of Linguistics. Jeff Leer adapted the Coastal orthography to create what is known as the Inland orthography in his book with Mrs. Nyman of Atlin, which occurred as recently as 1993 (Nyman and Leer, 1993). The lack of a standardized orthography has also contributed to a lack of consistency in developing language programs and teaching materials. In his article on the orthographies of Tlingit, James Crippen lists a total of twenty different writing systems. He comments that Tlingit:

> has a peculiarly large number of writing systems both for the use of native speakers and for transcription. Such an "embarrassment of riches" causes rifts among the community of native speakers and impedes the spread of literacy by making texts in one orthography difficult for users of another orthography (Crippen, 2007).

Norris, in her analysis of the 2001 Census data on Aboriginal Languages writes that, in Canada, there are only 200 first language speakers of Tlingit (2007:22), and it can be considered endangered. She continues by stating that although:

> …the Tlingit language family has one of the oldest mother tongue populations,… the index of second language acquisition and average age of speakers indicates that two people (usually younger) speak the language to every one person with a mother tongue. These indicators suggest that younger generations are more likely to learn Tlingit as a second language (2007: 22).

In light of this information, it is even more important to develop standardized orthographies and language curriculum for the Tlingit language in general, and for the community of Atlin where there are only two fluent speakers of Tlingit still alive (Gordon, 2007).

The Loon River Cree First Nation Background

The Loon River Cree First Nation is located at Loon Lake, Alberta at 56° 32' latitude and -115° 24' longitude The community has a population of 473 individuals, 377 of whom live on reserve (INAC, 2008). Previously known as one of the "isolated communities" of northern Alberta the Loon River Cree First Nation's traditional territory is located within the Treaty 8 area of Alberta, approximately 175 kilometres north of Lesser Slave Lake in north-central Alberta. Treaty 8 was originally signed in 1899; however, members of Loon River Cree First Nation did not sign the Treaty, and were not recognized as a band until 1991 (see Federal Government of Canada, 1991). The most commonly referenced reason behind the Loon River Cree First Nation's absence from the signing of Treaty 8 is that the Treaty commissioners traveled by major rivers, and the Loon River Cree were missed

because they lived "in the bush" between the rivers (J. Noskey, 2007).

According to Arthur Noskey, current Chief of Loon River:

> They say that a lot of the commissioners traveled by the water ways, which was the Wabasca River to the east of us, and Peace River to the west, Saskatchewan to the south, and then the Peace River goes north, north and right on the west. So, we're in the hub of the waterways, and I think that's how a lot of the people were missed … its all bush [and the commissioners] had to travel cross country. I think waterways were the best way to travel, or along waterways, along water bodies. I think that's how they kind of got missed out … Fort MacMurray, I know they were found … It's just us being in the middle [who weren't] (Noskey, 2006).

The Loon River Cree did not receive reserve lands until the community signed an addendum to Treaty 8 in 1999[16], which is known as a specific land claim. Federry states that in 2001 there were a total of 1071 specific land claims submitted to the government; and of this 1071 only 251 have been resolved and the number that is submitted is increasing every year (as quoted in McNab, 1992).[17] Prior to the recognition of the community members as status Indians, they were often believed to be Métis. For example, in *The Métis and the Land in Alberta: Land Claims Research Project 1979-1980*, published by the Métis Association of Alberta the community profile for Loon Lake states, "Loon Lake is a predominantly Métis community … as in the other communities we visited, trapping and hunting are actively pursued" (Sawchuk and Grey, 1980: 290).

The fact that the Loon River Cree were previously known as "isolated" is particularly ironic due to the fact that it is their current loss of isolation that has led to the recent development of language planning within the community,

---

[16] An addendum means that Loon River is a part of Treaty 8, only belatedly, and they are no different from the other communities that signed in 1899.

[17] It is difficult to determine exactly how many specific claims are currently filed, although Indian and Northern Affairs Canada states that 460 have been concluded as of March 31st, 2006 (http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ps/clm/asc_e.html).

and it is worthwhile to examine in more detail why Loon Lake was designated an "isolated" community. The first reference to Loon River's isolation that I have been able to locate is a 1970 report entitled, "*A Socio-Economic Study of Isolated Communities in Northern Alberta*" compiled by the Human Resources Development Authority, Government of Alberta, Research and Planning Division. According to this document, isolated communities are defined as:

> A group of communities located in the vicinity of Lesser Slave Lake and north … They are unincorporated settlements, often in the Green Zone (an area withdrawn from settlement) and with the exception of Indian Reserves and Métis colonies, have no legal status …
>
> A. A community may be geographically isolated because it is accessible by:
>
> 1) water only
> 2) air only
> 3) truck or all terrain vehicles only
> 4) in winter only
>
> B. It may be isolated economically in that
>
> 1) family incomes are less than $3,000 per annum
> 2) the community population ranges between 80 and 1,000 persons according to the 1966 census.
>
> C. It may be isolated culturally and socially in that:
>
> 1) communications with the larger social organization such as the Province or Canada are difficult or impossible.
> 2) standards of health care, education, and the general well-being are substantially lower than those of the dominant culture.
> 3) In short, there is a failure to benefit materially and culturally from the achievement of the dominant society; and inability to enter into the social, cultural, and economic mainstream of Alberta life (Mansell, 1970:29)

In 1970, the community at Loon Lake was considered isolated within the report because they had a population of 150 people (23 Status Indians, 121 Métis, and 6 Whites), there was one two-roomed school house for grades one through eight, there were no health facilities, there were only three roads to the community, only one of which was a year long accessible road, there was

no electrical or water distribution within the community, communication was via a battery operated radio, and the community was entirely within the Green Zone and withdrawn from settlement[18] (Mansell, 1970).

The term "isolated communities" was again used in 1975, when six Aboriginal communities (Chipweyan Lake, Little Buffalo, Loon Lake, Peerless Lake, Sandy Lake, and Trout Lake) "attempted to place a caveat on approximately 33,000 square miles of Crown lands in northern Alberta" (Reddekopp, 1998: 2). The caveat was filed in order to stop development on Native lands without consultation during the time of an oil and gas boom in Northern Alberta. The report of the Métis commission also describes the impact that resource development would have had on the isolated Aboriginal Communities. In 1977, the participants of the Demographic Survey Meeting:

> … noted that several explorations are being conducted into the possibility of another major oil sands discovery north of Slave Lake. If this exploration confirms a major find, again communities must be prepared for the influx of large numbers of people, and the transition from isolation to industrialization (NCC et. al., 1977, as quoted in Sawchuk and Grey, 1980: 279).

The caveat was rejected due to newly passed provincial legislation that came to be known as Bill 29. The legislation, which changed the wording of the Alberta Land Titles Act, retroactively prohibited caveats on unpatented Crown Land. In his book on the Lubicon Cree Nation, Goddard describes how years later the premier stated, "the bill had to do with the dispute with the Métis [isolated] settlements with regard to their mineral claims and the legal advice we received" (Goddard, 1991: 51).

---

[18] In 1970, Alberta government planners used the term "Green Zone" to refer to areas that were isolated or pictured in green on maps of the provinces due to the high amounts of land that were undeveloped.

The isolation of Loon Lake is again mentioned in Neil Reddekopp's description of the connection between the communities of Little Buffalo and the Lubicon Lake Nation[19] to the Loon River Cree. For Reddekopp isolation is "one of the defining characteristics of Loon Lake" (1998: 54). Outlining information from archival records, specifically the genealogy of the community relating to the status of its members, he continues by saying:

> as recently as 1990 an extremely small proportion of the residents of Loon Lake had ever received the benefit of Treaty … Loon Lake in 1990 could best be described as a true 'isolated community' – a community in the very heart of the Peace-Athabasca basin which had not only been missed at the time Treaty 8 was signed, but which had been ignored by the Department of Indian Affairs for the 90 years that followed" (1998: 65-66).

Today, the majority of Loon River community members live on the reserve at Loon Lake, although the community has two other reserves including one at Swampy Lake and another smaller reserve at Loon Prairie (where there used to be a wintering village site- see Chapter Four). In my interview with current Loon River Cree Chief Arthur Noskey, I asked what the biggest change in the community has been since their land claim was settled. He replied:

> The biggest change would be running water, getting water and sewer and putting that infrastructure in. Prior to the settlement the only people that had running water were those that had it from the province because of special needs under the province (Noskey, 2006).

Other changes that occurred in the community were the development of a housing plan, the building of the health centre, the band office, and the new school. Since the construction of the school, there have been issues with staff shortages and they have closed the high school portion of the community school. Arthur explained that the closing of the high school was related to the

[19] For more information on the Lubicon Lake First Nation (Loon River's neighbours, who have received world-wide attention for their Aboriginal Title claim in the Treaty 8 area) see: Goddard, John (1991) Last *Stand of the Lubicon Cree*. Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre and the "Friends of the Lubicon" website at http://www.tao.ca/~fol/

difficulty in "getting quality teachers out here in the north" (Noskey, 2006). The high school students now travel outside of Loon Lake to attend school in local Red Earth Creek, Slave Lake, and even to St. Albert, Alberta, which is four and a half hours from Loon Lake. During the 2007-2008 school year, the community did start offering the Sun-Child e-learning program, which offers on-line distance education, and some of the students have been able to return to the community.

Another benefit Arthur Noskey ascribes to the settlement of the land claim is the increased rate of employment in the community. He says:

> there were many jobs that were created when we started finalizing the settlement. There was a lot of work for membership with the equipment company, but also in the offices in the reception areas, the executive receptionist, and the executive secretary. We've hired our own band manager from the community, and the manager for our company is also a band member. There's a lot of opportunity right now (Noskey, 2006).

The permanent settlement at Loon Lake was the result of Christian Alliance Missionary Clarence Jaycox opening a school in Loon Lake in 1955. Community members also continue to trap, hunt, and fish, although this is no longer the staple it used to be for members of the community. People also spend time out on the land during the bible camps that are held in rotation throughout the summer, as Christianity continues to be an important part of the community today (see Westman, 2008). Prior to the opening of the school, community members spent more time out on the land trapping, fishing and hunting.[20]

---

[20] For more information on specific locations and activities see: Loon River Cree First Nation. (In Production). *"Eskopihk ekwa Anohch", Then and Now: A Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study by the Loon River Cree First Nation.* Eva Whitehead, Laverne Letendre, Richard Davis, Barry Hochstein, and Christine Schreyer (eds.)

On August 26th, 2006 I met Richard Davis at a coffee shop in Edmonton to further discuss my research plans and the volunteer project I would be conducting with the Loon River Cree First Nation.[21] Richard, a Cree consultant, is from the Swan Hills First Nation, located on Lesser Slave Lake, although he has been working for Loon River since 2003, when their Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study began. Due to the limited space on reserve, Richard offered me a room in the trailer that he lived in when working in the community. The community of Loon Lake is located approximately six kilometers from Red Earth Creek, which is the closest town. Richard stayed in a trailer owned by ATCO gas and electric company, which they provided to the First Nation due to the large amounts of work they conduct in the Loon River Cree First Nation's traditional territory. I stayed with Richard in Red Earth for the majority of my time working with the Loon River Cree, although at times, when the trailer became crowded with ATCO workers and other consultants working for the community, I would stay in the Loon River Cree Contractor's (the band owned construction company) room at a work camp in Red Earth (these are similar to hotels, but have dorm-like rooms and all meals are served in a cafeteria style room and are included in the price).

Although I was not able to participate in a family life situation in Loon Lake, as I was in Atlin, I was able to conduct participant observation when I was working in the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study office, as well as during my time in the Clarence Jaycox community school, and at various community events that were held while I was there, including: hide-tanning

[21] I did not sign a contract with the Loon River Cree First Nation. When I asked the Band Manager, Peter, if I needed to sign a contract he informed me that it wouldn't be necessary as I had received Richard's approval and that was good enough for Chief and Council.

workshops and bible camp. I enjoyed these experiences immensely, not only for the amount of information I was able to learn about language use in different parts of the community, but also because I was able to meet and socialize with more of the community members. I also conducted interviews with the current Chief, as well as former Band Councilors (from the time of the addendum in 1999), and members of the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Team. I did ask other members of the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Team, Band Councilors (former and present), and the Cree language teacher if they would consent to an individual interview, but many people did not want to participate often suggesting others who would know more than themselves. As a result I conducted more interviews in Atlin than in Loon Lake. I think this is in part because of the differences in communication styles between Tlingit speakers (who tend to be quite direct, particularly Tlingit women) (personal communication, Gordon, 2006) versus Cree speakers (who tend to have a more indirect communication style) (see Darnell, 1974). I will expand on this in Chapter Five when I discuss differences in language planning strategies between the two communities. In total, I have worked with the Loon River Cree for a period of approximately two years.[22]

My time in the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study and Consultation Unit office allowed me to learn about the processes of consultation that were occurring within Loon River's traditional territory, but also in other parts of Alberta. Members of the Alberta provincial government and industry workers would sometimes visit the office while I was working

[22] Although I spent less time in Loon Lake than in Atlin, I feel that my experiences working with the Taku River Tlingit enabled me to focus my research with the Loon River Cree much more quickly.

there in order to discuss potential development in Loon River Cree traditional territory (as defined by their Traditional and Use and Occupancy Study), and I was able to observe the limited use of Cree that these individuals spoke and the impacts this might have for the continued viability of Cree in the community. I was also able to attend the 4th Interjurisdictional Symposium on Aboriginal Involvement in Resource Management, as well as conduct research at the Alberta Provincial Archives in Edmonton, Alberta with community members from the Loon River Cree First Nation. During my time in Loon Lake, I was invited along on a site visit to an abandoned cabin, which was identified during one of the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study interviews with an elder (see Figure 2). Being able to be out on the land, with team members from the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, as well as three elders of the community, I was able to see just how much land the community members used to cover during their seasonal round, and this put into perspective the concept that both communities stressed – "our land is our *territory*, not just our reserves".

Figure Two: Joe Noskey and Frank Noskey during
Loon River Cree Traditional Land Use Study Site Visit
Photo Taken by: C. Schreyer, Winter 2007, north of Loon Lake, AB

The Cree Language Context

The Cree language belongs to the Algonquian language family. It is widespread across Canada, encompassing six provinces and one territory (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and the Northwest Territories[23]). Cree has been recorded as one of the three native languages expected to survive in Canada; the others include Inuktitut and Ojibwa (Hills, 2005; Aboriginal Languages Task Force Report, 2005). Norris (2007) lists Cree has having 97, 230 mother-tongue speakers, 20,160 of whom are second language learners of Cree. Cree is also described as "largely viable" within the Aboriginal Languages Task Force report (Aboriginal Languages Task Force Report, 2005). The language is split into five distinct dialects based on phonological considerations as well as differences in

[23] Cree is one of eight official Aboriginal languages in the Northwest Territories.

vocabulary, which are regionally specific. These are labeled based on geographic and natural features, including animals, of the areas in which they are found.[24] These include: Plains Cree dialect ("y"), Swampy Cree dialect ("n"), Moose Cree dialect ("l"), Wood Cree dialect ("th"), and Atihkamek (or Whitefish in Cree) Cree dialect ("r"). The letters listed above represent the dominant phonological difference in the dialects, and academics would generally group the Loon River Cree way of speaking under the Wood Cree dialect. However, during my work in Loon Lake, community members made the distinction between "northern Cree" (that which they spoke) and "southern Cree" (that spoken closer to Edmonton). Westman further elaborates on this distinction. He writes:

> Cree linguist George Cardinal, of Wabasca, AB, describes "my language" as
>
> > "Northern Cree," a mixture of Woods Cree ("TH" Dialect) and Plains Cree (LeClaire and Cardinal 1998: xi). However, L'Hirondelle *et al* treat the "northern sound" as a subdialect of the "Y" Dialect (2001:15) and do not mention any connection for it to Woods Cree. Phonologically, Northern Cree differs from Plains Cree mainly in its substitution of "ī" for "e." Lexically, however, Northern Cree is distinct enough to require a number of distinct or variant entries in the *Alberta Elders' Cree Dictionary* (LeClaire and Cardinal 1998), while still fairly easy for fluent Plains Cree speakers to understand, provided that "you have to really listen to what they're saying," as Ray G. Thunderchild stated.

Across the dialects, there have also been inconsistencies among the orthographies that communities use. First, there is a distinction between the Roman Orthography and Syllabics, which are geometric shapes used to represent consonant-vowel combinations. Syllabics are used more often in Manitoba and Ontario, where they originated (Westman, 2008), but there is

[24] For a more in-depth description of the geographical dialects of Cree see: Westman, C. 2008. *Understanding Cree Religious Discourse.* Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Alberta, Department of Anthropology.

also a difference in writing standards between those communities that use macrons to indicate long vowels and those that mark long vowels with double letters (see Ellis, 1995). Westman describes the local varieties of Cree that occur in northern Alberta. In his research he discovered that:

> Even between northern Alberta communities, differences in speech practice exist. As I moved the focus of my research from Cadotte Lake east to Trout Lake/Peerless Lake in 2005, it became clear that many people felt the two districts (sharing kin groups and located less than 200 km apart) each had a distinct style and speed of speech, which could be recognized and pinpointed by fluent speakers familiar with the region. Moreover, the community of Loon River, in between these areas, was recognized as having yet a third, intermediate, "way of speaking" (Hymes 1974). (2008: 83-84).

Due to the large numbers of speakers of the Cree language there have been many books and teaching materials created in all of the dialects, although the Plains Cree dialect appears to be the most active in new research. In Loon Lake, the orthographic choices that we (the community and I) made for the community storybooks were based on the conventions that are most often used in Alberta (macrons) as well as the community specific sounds that represent the Loon River dialect (see Chapters Three and Four). Although Cree is still considered a viable language within Canada, the Aboriginal Languages Task Force records it as "losing ground" (2005: ii), and I will now turn to a more detailed analysis of this report.

National and Local Aboriginal Language Planning Strategies

Land

Within their June 2005 report, the Aboriginal Languages Task Force came up with twenty-five recommendations for language maintenance and revitalization, including developing a Languages and Cultures Council and

creating a strategy that was "child centred, Elder focused, and community driven" (2005:vii). Following a change in Canadian Federal Government in 2006, the money allocated for the preservation of Aboriginal Languages and Cultures was cut. A news article on the funding cuts quotes Canadian Heritage Minster[25], Bev Oda as stating, "I asked for plans on how the money was going to be spent, there were no definitive plans. We have to be effective here"[26]. The story goes on to state that $40 million dollars over the next eight years will be set aside for language preservation. Despite the efforts of the Aboriginal Languages Task Force, Daveluy's comments from 2004 that "planning and a coherent policy for Canadian aboriginal languages policy remains inexistent" (Daveluy, 2004) can still be seen as true in 2008. The report states that their strategy is "based on 'bottom-up' community-driven language planning"; however, the strategy that the Task Force has put forward diverges from those that the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Loon River Cree First Nation use within their communities. Kaplan and Baldauf write that:

> ...while the macro grand national language planning schemes have dominated the language planning literature, the micro situations have been ignored and much less is known about the participants or how decisions in such situations are made (1997:82).

My research adds to the literature on micro-language planning amongst Indigenous language groups and within this section I will outline some of the themes of rhetoric that is used in the Aboriginal Languages Task Force and

[25] In 2005, the Canadian Heritage Minister was responsible for the Department of Canadian Heritage, as well as the Status of Women. In 2008, the position changed to become the Canadian Minister of Heritage and Official Languages. This is a separate position than the Canadian Minster of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.
[26] See http://www.cbc.ca/canada/north/story/2006/11/06/aboriginal-language.html for the complete story.

compare these to the local strategies of the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree.

Within the Aboriginal Languages Task Force, as I have described above, there is a strong connection outlined between Aboriginal languages and the land. Within the Task Force Report the subheading for Part VII: A National Language Organization states:

> What is done to the land is done to the people, and what is done to the people is done to the land. The Creator gave us all that we need: the forest, the people, the animals; all that grows; and most important the language – so it is imperative that we take care of it (2005: 98).

This sentiment echoes that of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation whose constitution states: "It is from which we came that connects all life. Our land is our lifeblood. Our land looks after us and we look after our land. Anything that happens to Tlingit land affects us and our culture" (TRTFN, 1993). The Taku River Tlingit First Nation have utilized these statements to perform their social identity and language ideology, and these words are also located on a sign that marks the border of their traditional territory as well as in land planning documents, and even on t-shirts from the Lands and Resources department (see Chapter Four). This relationship between land and language is also implicit in the community used phrase *Ha Tlatki Ha Kustiyi* (Our Land – Our Way of Life), which I discuss in greater detail in Chapter Four. The Loon River Cree First Nation has also implicitly employed this ideology of connection between language and land, and this can be seen in the mandate for the community's Consultation Unit, which interacts with government and industry on land related issues (see Chapter Three). Their policy states one of their goals as "prǫtect[ing] the *culture, language* and lifestyle of the LRFN community and membership" (LRCFN Consultation Unit, Policies and

Procedures, 2006, emphasis added). The relationship between land and language is one that both national and local strategies share, and land claims, then, can be seen to be relevant to discussions on language planning.

The Aboriginal Languages Task Force report also connects this loss of control over lands to language endangerment. It states:

> Languages have been described as being akin to the miner's canary: where languages are in danger, it is a sign of environmental distress. Certainly, this is true for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis languages. Language loss in Canada closely parallels the weakening of the vital connection of First Nation, Inuit, and Métis people to their homelands as a result of alienation of their lands or resource development, such as hydroelectric dams, mining, and forestry (2005: 72).

The first recommendation that the Aboriginal Languages Task Force makes is labeled "the link between languages and the land", and argues for "meaningful participation in stewardship, management, co-management or co-jurisdiction arrangements" (2005: 73). Stewardship over lands and resources is a concept that both communities are applying locally via land planning initiatives. The Aboriginal Languages Task Force report addresses *stewardship over languages* in their comments on the Canadian Minister of Heritage's commitment to Aboriginal Languages from 2002. The report states, "At that time, it was already clear, that to survive and prosper the languages and cultures of Canada's First Nation, Inuit, and Métis peoples must be under their *stewardship* and control and receiving their local community direction" (2005: 13, emphasis added). However, I believe that the report does not take this argument far enough to fully represent the local realities of the communities. Both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree, through the land stewardship policies they have put in place, have incorporated language as just

one of the resources that are a part of the land, although only the Taku River Tlingit First Nation labels their policies as stewardship explicitly.

Morrow and Hensel (1992) have argued that terms used to describe the management of lands and resources are often contested, and this can have implications on how insider's and outsider's many view land management. Webster's New World College Dictionary provides eight definitions for the word "steward", but it is the last one that most closely matches the Taku River Tlingit's use of the word. In this dictionary, a steward is "a person morally responsible for the careful use of money, time, talents, or other resources, especially with respect to the principles or needs of a community of group" (Webster's New World, 1996: 1315). The Taku River Tlingit First Nation, in their Vision and Management documents, describes their continued role as "responsible stewards of the lands and waters within our territory" (TRTFN, 2003:4). For them responsible stewardship:

> requires us to exercise our leadership in all aspects of caring of our lands. This is very important because our social well-being and sustainable livelihood, as well as those of our neighbours, are inseparable from the health of our lands and waters and from the decisions about how we all live on and use these lands. We would be abandoning our responsibilities: to our ancestors, to our children, and to those who live here now, if we did not actively exercise our responsibility in the area of conservation and land use planning that must include responsible development (TRTFN, 2003: 17).

For the Loon River Cree First Nation, conducting a Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study was one way in which they could continue to look after the land. According to Richard Davis, Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Manager, the study was "more than merely recording the history of our people; the information needs to be able to be used to promote economic development and assist in the self-sufficiency of the Nations" (Davis, 2003: 2).

The Loon River Cree saw the usefulness of the information that was collected as one of the most significant factors of the study. As Davis writes, "it is critical that the information collected throughout the [Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study] not be left on a shelf, in a document, but be a living active source for consultative purposes" (Davis, 2003: 5). Therefore, both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree have implemented land planning that is based on the concept of stewardship, and this in turn has impacted their language planning. Ruiz defines orientations in language planning as "a complex of dispositions toward…languages and their role in society. These dispositions may be largely unconscious…" (Ruiz, 1984: 16), but it is possible to uncover them in language "policies and proposals which already exist" (Ruiz, 1984: 16). As will be seen throughout this dissertation, both communities have also incorporated language planning into their land stewardship models and the collaborative language curriculum projects I helped to develop with both communities incorporate knowledge of the land and stewardship practices into language learning and are an extension of this language planning ideology.

Nation

Within the Aboriginal Languages Task Force another focus has been on the concept of nationhood. One section title includes the phrase "Our Languages and Cultures: Our Nationhood", and here it is written:

> First Nation, Inuit, and Métis peoples were nations in the original and truest sense of the term – groups of people linked by common bonds of language, culture, ethnicity, and a collective desire to maintain their distinctiveness and political autonomy (2005: 26).

The Task Force also asserts that, "Canada's departure from this understanding [of Aboriginal peoples as nations] …has contributed to language loss" (2005: ii). However, amongst both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree, ideas of nationhood do not surface in language planning but rather in negotiations for control over land. As mentioned previously, language planning is a part of land planning in these communities. In fact, Taku River and Loon River are utilizing "genres of nation-hood" (Dinwoodie, 1998) such as auto-biography and declarations, and I argue in Chapter Four that the use of these forms of community discourse are performatives of sovereignty (Sullivan, 2006, following Austin's (1962) notion of performance) in order to assert their stewardship of the land and the languages that are found there. Taku River and Loon River have also utilized other nation-building devices (such as the creation of monuments, symbolic expressions of identity, and standardized orthographies) and these have had an impact on the community and the linguistic differentiation that each of the communities is asserting (see Irvine and Gal, 2000).

In his ground-breaking work on the creation of nations, Anderson defined them as "an imagined political community". He stated that nations are imagined:

> …because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (1983: 6).

Here language can be seen to be of utmost importance to the concept of a nation because members of a nation are recognized by their *imagined* ability to communicate with each other. As Wright describes, "Possessing its own language helps define a group. They are X because they speak X. This is a

desideratum of nation building even in cases where the national language never actually becomes widely spoken" (Wright, 2004: 45). If language is such an important part of nation-building it becomes significant to note that the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree do not explicitly use language rhetoric as part of their nation-building strategies. Rather, for them, language is an implicit part of the land, and this connection to their territory as stewards of the land and resources is where each community's focus has been in terms of their identities as nations.

One way in which Western nations have incorporated land in nation-building is through the use of monuments. Osbourne states that "monuments focus attention on specific places and events and are central to this endeavour of constructing symbolic landscapes of power" (2001:9). Anderson has also commented on the importance of monuments in his description of the importance of the tombs of Unknown Soldiers, as these monuments are "saturated with ghostly *national* imagings" (Anderson, 1983: 9). In Chapter Four, I describe how Wayne Carlick stated that with art you can express things without language, such as Tlingit ways of being (Carlick, 2007) in regards to the signs he has posted in the Taku River Tlingit territory. The signs that are posted in the Taku River Tlingit territory (regardless of what language they are in) can, I would argue, be considered monuments. For instance, there is a sign located at the border of the Taku River Tlingit territory to the north marking the landmark mountain *K'iyán*. This mountain is significant as it is a wolf clan mountain, but has importance for both clans as there are stories told about the mountain's significance as a resting place during a great flood (Carlick, 2007; Tizya, 2006). This sign is multi-layered

in meaning. It illustrates Tlingit and English orthographies, it has helped promote the social identity of the Taku River people as using the land for time immemorial (see Chapter four), and it is a marker that promotes "national cohesion…through a sense of mutual historic experience" (Osbourne, 2001: 3).

The Loon River Cree have also used symbolic expressions that reflect their "nation-hood" and one such expression is their community flag. Anderson has also described flags as part of the imagined reality of nations (1983: 81). In Loon Lake, the community flag is flown in front of the band office as well as in front of the school and at the health centre (see Figure Three). The flag has an image of two loons sitting in blue water with cat-tails surrounding them; this image also appears on signs for the community (including the community owned contracting company), letterhead, and clothing (including t-shirts and fleece vests). This symbol has become an important part of their community identity just as the artwork on the Tlingit signs have in Taku River Tlingit territory, but the fact that the Taku River Tlingit has used monuments on the land to represent their national identity may be representative of slight differences in Cree and Tlingit concepts of property (see below).

Figure Three: Loon River Cree First Nation Band Office sign
Photo taken by: Christine Schreyer, October 2006

Anderson has also stressed the importance of writing to nation-building, although he was focused on the role of print media. For Anderson, "…fellow-readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed in their secular, particular, visible invisibility, the embryo of the nationally imagined community" (Anderson, 1983: 44). Orthographies are important in both communities for the printed items that they are putting forth as part of their performatives of sovereignty (as discussed in Chapter Four). Schieffelin and Doucet note that, "because acceptance of an orthography is based more on political and social considerations than on linguistic and pedagogical factors, orthographic debates are rich sites for investigating competing nationalist discourses" (1994: 176)[27]. Within the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Loon River Cree First Nation, orthographies have been part of the language

[27] See also Romaine, Suzanne (2002). Signs of Identity, Signs of Discord: Glottal Goofs and the Green Grocer's Glottal in Debates on Hawaiian Orthography. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 12(2): 189-224.

planning that each community has developed through their land planning processes and their Lands and Resources Departments.

Wright argues that, "an early objective in the nationalist project was thus to achieve linguistic convergence within the group and to differentiate the national language from all allied dialects on the continuum" (2004: 35). One way in which each community has illustrated social solidarity is through the use of an orthography that is related to their social identity. Within the Loon River Cree First Nation, members of the community wanted to illustrate the ways that they were different from Cree speakers in the south of Alberta (specifically) and across Canada through the use of an orthography that would reflect local speech patterns. In Atlin, the community chose to use the orthography that the Sealaska Heritage Institute[28], located in Juneau Alaska, utilizes in their language resources. Wright also notes that, "changing an alphabet can also be a way of reaffirming identity or signaling new orientations. Adopting an alphabet may indicate the associations a group of speakers wishes to claim" (2004: 51); and I argue that this true in the case of the Taku River Tlingit, as they have used this new way of writing to re-connect to the Alaskan Tlingit community (see Chapter Four).

Language Rights

This brings us to Wright's premise that, "language revitalization [and maintenance] may be a phenomenon which co-exists more easily with globalization than with nation-states" (2004: 14). According to Wright:

[28] This is the Institute run by the Sealaska Native Corporation located in Juneau, and their mission "is to perpetuate and enhance Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian cultures. Language revitalization is a priority of SHI. is the preservation and maintenance of language and culture" (http://www.sealaskaheritage.org/).

> Supranationalism and globalization are associated with the current spread of minority rights, including language rights. These two phenomena can be seen to be opening up space for difference in ways that the nation state system does not accommodate and would not tolerate. A number of developments have made this possible. First, formal exchanges within the institutions of supranationalism and globalization have inaugurated a system where basic human rights are widely recognized and where minority rights are increasingly accepted (2004: 182).

The Aboriginal Languages Task Force also uses the concept of language rights within their report, which states:

> It is our view that while language is a collective right, it is equally a fundamental human right, as well as an individual right. The minority language right protection in section 25 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* is a precedent for recognizing that language rights attach to individuals (Aboriginal Languages Task Force, 2005: 99).

The Aboriginal Languages Task Force outlines the International Conventions on language rights, human rights, indigenous rights and many more in their Appendix F (2005), and Sue Wright has also detailed these in her book *Language Policy and Language Planning* (2004). She considers, "whether language rights can be seen as individual rights or whether they are *de facto* a kind of group right" (2004: 225-226). Wright goes on to explain that this is a fundamental point in defining identity, as "using the language of a group is a kind of social glue" (2004: 226), and can be used to help construct their social identity.

Patrick defines language rights as "those that guarantee in principle the ability of a particular group of people to be educated in their own language and to use it in both everyday and official contexts" (2005:369). The Aboriginal Languages Task Force report also states that one of the goals of their report was the creation of federal legislation that recognized the status of

First Nation, Inuit, and Métis languages within Canada. The report states that this legislation should:

> …not only acknowledge the place of First Nation, Métis and Inuit languages in Canada's social fabric, but also provide for funding for languages on the same footing as English and French, the current official languages (2005: 63).

Recommendation numbers ten and eleven within the report are for equivalent funding for language immersion programs, particularly for youth. The report also outlines how the Assembly of First Nations rejected the federally proposed Bill C-37 in 1989, which proposed that Aboriginal Languages would be included among the heritage languages of Canada. Their rejection was based:

> on the grounds that First Nations languages cannot be relegated to the status of minority languages. Instead, they have a unique position as the languages of the founding nations of Canada and as treaty signatories that must be reflected in separate provisions for their protection and maintenance (2005: 41).

The rhetoric of nationhood and language rights go hand and hand within the Aboriginal Languages Task Force report despite the fact that local communities such as the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Loon River Cree First Nation do not use these models within their language planning. Whiteley writes that "in the world system, an ideology of linguistic rights is decidedly logocentric and dependent on nation-state ideas of language and community" (2003: 717) and within the Aboriginal Languages Task Force the members of the committee used this western ideology of nationhood and language rights to formulate their strategy of language planning. The Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree do not use this ideology and I will outline here my opinions on why these communities have chosen not to do so below.

Often in Western culture we define rights as something we *possess*. In fact, earlier I quoted Wright as claiming that, "*Possessing* its own language helps define a group" (2004: 45, emphasis added). Errington, in his article entitled "Getting Language Rights: The Rhetorics of Language Endangerment and Loss" (2003), describes this trend of asserting language rights in order to reverse language shift. He states that this strategy:

> …presupposes languages to be *possessions* of speakers, rather than natural phenomena. Under this profile, endangered languages' values are linked to speakers' shared biographies and collective identities: They are not natural conditions to be maintained but, rather, rights to be recognized by sources of political authority (Errington, 2003: 727, emphasis added).

Whiteley also argues that language rights discourse separates language as a thing, distinct from self and community, which takes on the form of a possession. He writes, "language rights discourse is …associated with an idea of property rights (as defined in Western law) and the capitalist economy as it is with a discourse of human rights" (2003: 713). I find this notion of languages as possessions to be in contradiction to the Taku River Tlingit's and the Loon River Cree's views of their languages. For these communities, their languages *are* natural conditions that need to be maintained, and this is how the communities have situated their languages in terms of language planning. Errington describes this view of languages as natural elements in a particular environment (otherwise known as eco-linguistics) as another way in which activists have used rhetoric to promote awareness of endangered languages (2003). However, in the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Loon River Cree First Nation this is an essential component of their language ideologies and orientations in language planning (Ruiz, 1984) as it is through their

actions and community policies that language planning and land planning have become integrated. The Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree see their languages as a resource that is a part of their lands, which they will continue to maintain as stewards of their lands. It can not be a *possession* as they do not *possess* the land. The land is maintained collectively through community decisions and is an essential element to the socially constructed community identities that they both have developed as a response to outsider's claims to their traditional territories. Differences do exist between Cree and Tlingit conceptions of property and land ownership. For instance, within Tlingit culture, clans often maintain "strong 'sentimental ties' to the land, which in some ways resembled the relation of ownership" (Nadasdy, 2003: 238). As Catherine McClellan noted during her fieldwork in the Southern Yukon between 1948 and 1951, "moiety or sib members held their common area in a kind of trusteeship, and developed strong emotional feelings about their stewardship" (McClellan, 1975: 483-84). However, this communal maintenance of lands based on clan or moiety does not occur in Cree culture, although many anthropologists have debated about whether or not Cree concepts of family hunting territory are equivalent to a form of property ownership.[29] The concept of stewardship in each community also reflects the ideology that they do not own the land, but rather those who have a moral responsibility to protect it. The obligation hunters have to look after the land can also be seen in Nadasdy's work with the Kluane First Nation, located in the southern Yukon. Nadasdy writes:

[29] It should be noted that the concept of property is a complex topic (see Nadasdy, 2003), and Tlingit and Cree communities have unique cultural conceptions of property and ownership. For information on Cree hunting territory ownership see: Speck, 1915; Leacock, 1945; Morantz, 1986; Scott, 1988; Flannery, 1995. For information on Tlingit clan territory ownership see: Goldschmidt and Haas, 1946; McClellan, 1975, and Thornton, 2003.

> One does not possess a right to kill animals merely because one was born to First Nations parents; rather animals are a gift. They give themselves to hunters when and if the hunters prove themselves worthy, and with this gift come heavy obligations and responsibilities. If hunters do not live up to these responsibilities, then the animals will stop giving to hunters. The notion of rights has no place in this relationship (Nadasdy, 2003:245).

Patrick has examined the differences between Aboriginal and Treaty rights and language rights discourse of French speaking Canadians in more detail, and states that the differences are the result of "social, cultural, and economic asymmetries" (2005: 376). The Aboriginal Languages Task Force has used both the rhetoric of nation-hood and language rights within their report, and neither of these can be seen in the community internal rhetoric of either the Taku River Tlingit First Nation or the Loon River Cree First Nation as it is contrary to their language ideologies. It should be explicitly noted though that the use of nationhood and language rights rhetoric was strategic for the Task Force, as they were directing their strategies to the Canadian Federal government and wanted to be seen as a nation on equal terms with Canada. In contrast, the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree First Nations do not seek this recognition as nations in their language planning, but rather in their land planning via land claims. Throughout my dissertation, I will address the language ideologies of the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree in order to determine the impact land claims has had on community discourse, social identity and language planning.

Organization of the Articles

The body of my dissertation includes three articles based on the research that I conducted with the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree. Upon reflection during the writing process, I realized that due to the volunteer

projects I undertook as part of my research I was conducting a form of action research. Brydon-Miller et al write that the key question in action research is, "how we go about generating knowledge that is both valid and vital to the well-being of individuals and communities, and for the promotion of larger-scale democratic change" (2003: 10). Both communities chose to work on language projects with me because they saw language revitalization and maintenance as a priority for their communities. They wanted to promote the well-being of community members through the promotion of language. Darnell has written about this discourse of "healing" that occurs in terms of language renewal (1994).

The process of conducting action research, working closely with communities, was also beneficial for me because I was able to learn more about the connection between land and language. I have chosen to organize the articles found within this dissertation in the chronological order in which they were written and published.[30] Fisher and Phelps in their analysis on alternatives to the standard social science writing suggest that producing a narrative in chronological order allows the writing to be "more rigorous and truthful" (2006: 153). Basso has also written about the process of writing ethnography. He comments in his work with the Western Apache:

> As must now be apparent, my own preference is for chronological narratives that move from interpretations of experience raw to those of experience digested, from moments of anxious puzzlement ("What the devil is going on here?") to subsequent ones of cautious insight ("I think perhaps I see.") Because that, more often than not, is how ethnographic fieldwork actually unfolds (1996: 110).

[30] The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research at the University of Alberta does not have regulations on the order in which articles in paper format dissertations need to be included.

I have chosen to arrange my articles in this manner because I feel that it allows the reader to more easily follow my trains of thought and the progression of my research.

The first article entitled, *"Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres": Un projet de revitalisation linguistique par le jeu*[31], was published in *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 31:1 (2007). This article focuses on my experiences working with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, and was co-written with a member of the Taku River Tlingit community, Louise Gordon. Louise and I, as well as other members of the community, created the game together. This article is highly descriptive, due to the fact that Louise and I wrote it with the intention that it could be a guide for others working on curriculum within endangered language communities. Within this article, Louise and I describe the importance of place names as language learning tools in Aboriginal communities, the necessity of providing relevance and context to language in order that it can be learnt more easily and be more memorable for language learners. We also discussed methods of intergenerational language learning and enjoyment or "fun" as a method of language learning. The volunteer project and working on this article with Louise enabled me to learn more about the practices of everyday Tlingit language use within the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. First, as I was working as a part of the Lands and Resources team it became apparent very early on how strong the link between land and language is in the local context. The game incorporated information that the Heritage section of the Lands and Resources Department had compiled over many years including recordings of a trip Antonia Jack,

[31]This paper was co-written with Louise Gordon, a member of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. An English version of this chapter appears in the Appendix.

Louise's Grandmother, took around Atlin Lake recording place names and words for animals and plants in Tlingit. Through my work on the game, I was able to see language planning in action including the choice the community made to change the orthography that was in common usage from the Inland Tlingit orthography to the Coastal Tlingit orthography. I was also able to participate in language lessons at the culture camp and throughout the three years I have spent in the community I have been in a position to see language planning at the local level and how it has expanded since 2005.

The second article, entitled *"Nehiyawewin Askîhk" – Cree Language on the Land: Language Planning Through Consultation in the Loon River Cree First Nation*, was published in *Current Issues in Language Planning* 9(4) in 2008. This article is also descriptive as it outlines the language planning (including status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning) that is currently occurring in the Loon River community. However, it also provides more of an analytical discussion of the community's use of the "language as a resource" orientation in language planning (Ruiz, 1984), incorporating Canadian Aboriginal language planning strategies and providing the framework of Aboriginal connection between land and language from the Aboriginal Languages Task Force (2005). The connection between land and language was again evident to me from the volunteer project I conducted with the Loon River Cree First Nation. The storybooks, as well as the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Atlas, incorporate stories of Loon River Cree traditional land use. At this point in my research, I had completed my fieldwork with both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree, and I was beginning to more fully analyze the similarities and differences between

the two communities. As well, this article begins to touch upon the differences in language planning strategies that are employed locally versus nationally. In Loon Lake, it is the Consultation Unit, which is charged with dealing with government and industry development in their traditional territory, who have developed a language maintenance strategy for the community. In this article, I argue that it is because the Loon River Cree have gained a measure of stewardship over their traditional lands through the government's recognition as their status as a nation that they are able to incorporate language planning within their land planning. Both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree have used the "language-as-resource" model of language planning and have developed language projects out of their Lands and Resources Departments individually. I further explored this connection in my third article, as well as other issues related to identity construction and language use in each community.

The third article, entitled *Negotiating Language on Negotiated Land*, has been accepted for publication in the Journal of Linguistic Anthropology. This article addresses the social identities that both Taku River and Loon River have constructed due to their negotiations with the government for land rights. It also addresses the language maintenance and revitalization strategies that they have developed as a result of these social identities. Within this article, I more explicitly address the idea of nationhood and how both communities are utilizing this concept in order to gain land rights. I elaborate on how this negotiation for land rights has led to a re-positioning of language to hold a place of prominence within both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree through their performatives of sovereignty. Due to the fact that

each chapter in this dissertation is a stand alone article, background information on the communities is repeated in each article to provide context for the reader and, consequently, is repetitive for readers of this body of work.

Finally, Chapter Five entitled, *"Directness and Indirectness: Local Language Planning amongst the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree,* addresses the connections between the articles more fully and addresses any gaps that occurred due to concentrating one article on one community over another. Throughout this introduction I have elaborated on the differences in national Aboriginal revitalization and maintenance strategies and local First Nations' revitalization and maintenance strategies. While land can be seen to be a common theme, the rhetoric that the Aboriginal Languages Tasks Force employed on nationhood and language rights is not seen in the local community-internal rhetoric of the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree. Within this final chapter, I examine the differences in language planning *between* the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree, and I provide a discussion on how differences in Tlingit and Cree communication styles (direct and indirect) may have impacted the language planning strategies of the communities particularly within public settings (where language is directed to outsiders). Lastly, I re-emphasize the importance of situating micro- language planning within macro-historical contexts, such as land claims, particularly for language communities who are struggling to maintain and/or revitalize their languages.

References Cited

Aboriginal Language Task Force Report (2005) *Towards a New Beginning: A Foundational Report for a Strategy to Revitalize First Nations, Inuit and Métis Languages and Cultures.* Report to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, June 2005.

Anderson, Benedict (1983) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* Verso Press: London.

Auge, Marc (1995) *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity.* Verso: New York.

Austin, J.L (1962) *How To Do Things With Words.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Basso, Keith H. (1996) *Wisdom Sits in Places: landscape and language among the Western Apache.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckman. (1996) *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday

Brydon-Miller, Mary and Davydd Greenwood, and Patricia Macguire (2003) Why Action Research? *Action Research* 1(1):9-28.

Cattell, Maria G. and Jacob C. Climo. (2002) Introduction. *Meaning in Social Memory and History: Anthropological Perspectives.* (Jacob Climo and Maria Cattell, eds.) Altamira Press, pp. 1-36.

Crippen, James (2007) An Embarrassment of Riches: The Proliferation of Tlingit Writing Systems. Unpublished manuscript. University of Hawai'i at Manoa. December 11th, 2007.

Cruikshank, Julie (1990) Getting the Words Right: Perspectives on Naming and Places in Athapaskan Oral History, in *Arctic Archaeology* 27(1), 52-65.

Darnell, Regna (1974) Correlates of Cree narrative performance. In *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking.* Richard Bauman and Joel Sherzer, eds. Pp. 315-336. London: Cambridge University Press.

Darnell, Regna (1994) Private Discourse, Public Discourse, and Algonquian Oral Tradition *Proceedings of the twenty-fifth Algonquian Conference.* Ottawa: Carelton University Press.

Dauenhauer, Nora Marks and Richard, Dauenhauer (editors) (1987) *Haa Shuka, Our Ancestors: Tlingit Oral Narratives.* Seattle: University of Washington Press; Juneau: Sealaska Heritage Institute.

---------- (1990) *Haa Yuwunáagu Yis, for Healing Our Spirit: Tlingit Oratory.* Seattle: University of Washington Press; Juneau: Sealaska Heritage Institute.

---------- (1994) *Haa Kusteeyi, Or Culture: Tlingit Life Stories.* Seattle: University of Washington Press; Juneau: Sealaska Heritage Institute.

---------- (1999) *Aan aduspelled x'úx' - Tlingit spelling book.* Juneau: Sealaska Heritage Institute.

---------- (2002) *Lingít X'éináx Sá! - Say it in Tlingit: A Tlingit Phrase Book.* Juneau: Sealaska Heritage Institute.

Daveluy, Michelle (2004) Self-governance VS Linguistic Peace among the Canadian Inuit. *Lingua Pax* 10, Barcelona Spain. Posted at //www.linguapax.org. 18p.

Davis, Richard. (2003) What is a Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study? Unpublished document.

Dinwoodie, David (1998) Authorizing Voices: Going Public in an Indigenous Language. *Cultural Anthropology* 13(2): 193-223.

Ellis, Doug. (1995). *Spoken Cree.* University of Manitoba Press: Winnipeg.

Errington, Joseph (2003) Getting Language Rights: The Rhetorics of Language Endangerment and Loss. *American Anthropologist* 105(4): 723-732.

Escobar, A. (2001) Culture Sits in Places: Reflections on Globalism and Subaltern Strategies on Localization. *Political Geography 20*: 139-74.

Federal Government of Canada, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. (1991) "The Matter of the Constitution of the Loon River Cree Band in the Province of Alberta", Ministerial Order, December 4th, 1991

Federal Government of Canada (1996) Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, vol. 1-5 Ottawa: Communication Group.

Fentress, James and Chris Wickham (1992) *Social Memory: New Perspectives on the Past.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers

Fisher, Kath and Renata Phelps (2006) Recipe or Performing Art? Challenging conventions for writing action research theses. *Action Research* 4(2):143-164.

Flannery, Regina (1995) *Ellen Smallboy: Glimpses of a Cree Woman's Life.* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Goddard, John. (1991) *Last Stand of the Lubicon Cree.* Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre

Goldschmidt, Walter R. and Theordore R. Haas (1946) Possessory Rights of the Natives of Southeast Alaska: A Report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Gordon, Nicole (2007) Tlingit Language and Culture. Guest Lecture in the Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology. University of Alberta, March 26th, 2007. Edmonton, Alberta.

Hills, Lynda (2005) Study evaluates new model for reviving endangered languages. In *The Ring*: University of Victoria Paper 31(2).

Hymes, Dell (1974) *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Irvine, Judith and Susan Gal (2000) Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentation. In *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Politics and Identities*. Paul Kroskrity (ed). School of American Research Press: Santa Fe.

Kaplan, Robert and Richard B. Baldauf (1997) *Language Planning: from practice to theory*. Frankfurt Lodge, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Kearns, Robin and Lawrence, Berg. (2002) Proclaiming Place: Towards a Geography of Place Name Pronunciation. *Social and Cultural Geography* 3(2): 283-302.

Leer, Jeff (1991) The Schetic Categories of the Tlingit Verb. PhD Dissertation University of Chicago: Chicago, Illinois.

Leacock, Eleanor (1954) The Montagnais 'Hunting Territory' and the Fur Trade. *American Anthropological Association Memoir 78* 56 (5): Part 2.

Liddicoat, A. and R. Baldauf (eds.) (2008) *Language Planning in Local Contexts.* Frankfurt Lodge, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Loon River Cree First Nation (2006) *Loon River First Nation Consultation Unit: Consultation Policies and Procedures.*

Loon River Cree First Nation (In Production) *"Eskopihk ekwa Anohch", Then and Now: A Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study by the Loon River Cree First Nation.* Eva Whitehead, Laverne Letendre, Richard Davis, Barry Hochstein, and Christine Schreyer (eds.)

Mansell, R. L. (1970) A Socio-Economic Study of Isolated Communities in Northern Alberta, *Report for Human Resources Development Authority, Government of Alberta, Research and Planning Division*, V. T. Janssen, Head. Edmonton, July 1970.

May, Stephen (2005) Language Rights: Moving the debate forward. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 9(3): 319-347.

McClellan, Catherine (1975) *My Old People Say: An Ethnographic Survey of Southern Yukon Territory. Part One and Two*, National Museums of Canada, Ottawa.

Mitcham, Allison (1993) *Taku: The Heart of North America's Last Great Wilderness.* Lancelot Press: Hantsport, Nova Scotia.

Morantz, Toby (1986) Historical Perspectives on Family Hunting Territories in Eastern James Bay. *Anthropologica* 28 (1-2): 65-91.

Morrow, Phyllis and Chase, Hensel (1992) Hidden Dissensions: Minority-Majority Relationships and the Use of Contested Terminology. *Arctic Anthropology* 29(1): 38-53.

Nadasdy, Paul (2003) *Hunters and Bureaucrats: Power, Knowledge, and Aboriginal-state relations in Southwest Yukon.* University of British Columbia Press: Vancouver, BC.

Naish, Constance M., & Gillian L. Story. (1963) *English-Tlingit Dictionary: Nouns.*1st edition. Fairbanks, Alaska: Summer Institute of Linguistics.

Norris, Mary Jane (2007) Aboriginal Languages in Canada: Emerging Trends and Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition. *Canadian Social Trends* No. 11-008.

Nyman, Elizabeth and Jeff, Leer (1993) *Gagiwdul.at: Brought Forth to Reconfirm: The Legacy of a Taku River Tlingit Clan.* Yukon Native Language Centre: Whitehorse and Alaska Native Language Center: Fairbanks.

Osborne, Brian S. (2001) Landscapes, memory, monuments, and commemoration: putting identity in its place. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*: 33(1): 39

Patrick, Donna (2005) Language rights in Indigenous communities: The case of the Inuit of Arctic Québec. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 9(3): 369-389.

Reddekopp, Neil (1998) The *Origin and History of the Cree Communities of Little Buffalo and Loon Lake, Alberta.* Alberta Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, Indian Land Claims Branch, Revised 1998.

Rogers, Edward (1963) *The Hunting Group-Hunting Territory Complex among the Mistassini Indians.* National Museum of Canada Bulletin No. 105, Anthropological Series No. 63. Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

Rosaldo, Renato (1980) *Illongot Headhunting, 1883-1974.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Ruiz, Richard. (1984) Orientations in language planning. *NABE Journal: the journal of the National Association for Bilingual Education,* 8(2), 15-34

Sapir, Edward (1929) The Status of Linguistics as a Science Language 5: 207-214.

Sawchuk, Patricia and Jarvis, Grey (1980) The *Isolated Communities of Northern Alberta, Métis and the Land: Report of the Land Claims Section* (Edmonton: Métis Association of Alberta, 1980)

Scott, Colin (1988) Property, Practice, and Aboriginal Rights among Quebec Cree Hunters. In *Hunters and Gatherers: Property, Power, and Ideology.* T. Ingold, D. Riches, and J. Woodburn (eds.). New York: St. Martin's Press. Pp. 35-51.

Schieffelin, Bambi B and Rachelle Charlier Doucet (1994) The "Real" Haitian Creole: Ideology, Metalinguistics, and Orthographic Choice. *American Ethnologist* 21(1): 176-200.

Schreyer, Christine (2008) "*Nehiyawewin Askîhk*" – Cree Language on the Land: Language Planning through Consultation in the Loon River Cree First Nation. *Current Issues in Language Planning: Language Planning and Minority Languages*. 9(4):440-453.

Schreyer, Christine (To Appear) Negotiating Language on Negotiated Land. *The Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*.

Schreyer, Christine and L. Gordon (2007) Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêstres: Un projet de revitalisation linguistique par le jeu. (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths: Fun and Games in Language Revitalization.) *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 31 (1): 143-162.

Searle, John R. (1995) *The Construction of Social Reality*. New York: The Free Press.

Speck, Frank (1915) The Family Hunting Band as the Basis of Algonkian Social Organization. *American Anthropologist* 17(2): 289-305.

Staples, Lindsay (1996) Determining the Impact of the Tulsequah Chief Mine Project on the Traditional Land Use of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation: Addendum on Impacts. A Report prepared for: Environmental Assessment Office, Province of British Columbia. North/West Resources Consulting Group: Whitehorse, Yukon.

Sullivan, Kathleen M. (2006) (Re) Landscaping Sovereignty in British Columbia, Canada. *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*. 29(1): 44-65.

Taku River Tlingit First Nation (1993). Constitution. Atlin, British Columbia.

Taku River Tlingit First Nation (2003) *Our Land is Our Future - Hà t_átgi hà khustiyxh*. Vision and Management Document for the Taku River Tlingit First Nation Lands and Resources Department. Atlin, British Columbia

Thornton, Thomas (2003) Place Names and the Language of Subsistence in Southeast Alaska. In J Blythe and R. McKenna Brown (eds.), *Maintaining the Links: Language, Identity, and the Land, Proceedings of the seventh conference presented by the Foundation for Endangered Languages* (pp. 29-35). Bath, UK: The Foundation for Endangered Languages.

Thornton, Thomas (2008) *Being and Place Amongst the Tlingit*. University of Washington Press: Seattle in association with Sealaska Heritage Institute: Juneau.

Webster's New World College Dictionary (1996) Victoria Neufeld and David Bernard Guralnik (eds.). 3rd Edition.

Westman, C. (2008) *Understanding Cree Religious Discourse*. Unpublished PhD Manuscript. Department of Anthropology, University of Alberta. Edmonton, Alberta.

Whiteley, Peter (2003) Do "Language Rights" Serve Indigenous Interests? Some Hopi and Other Queries. *American Anthropologist* 105(4): 712-722.

Woolard, Kathryn, and Bambi Schieffelin (1994) Language Ideology. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 23: 55-82.

Wright, Sue (2004) Language *Planning and Language Policy: From Nationalism to Globalisation*. Palgrave Macmillan: New York.

Websites References:

BC treaty negotiations = http://www.bctreaty.net/nations_3/taku.html

BC Government "new relationship" = http://www.em.gov.bc.ca/subwebs/AboriginalAffairs/New_Relationship.htm

CBC story on Aboriginal Languages Task Force funding cuts: = http://www.cbc.ca/canada/north/story/2006/11/06/aboriginal-language.html

First Nations Profiles = http://sdiprod2.inac.gc.ca/FNProfiles/FNProfiles_home.htm

INAC on Land Claims = http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/al/ldc/index-eng.asp

Taku Wild = http://www.takuwild.ca

Taku River Tlingit First Nation *v.* British Columbia (Project Assessment Director), [2004] 3 S.C.R. 550, 2004 SCC 74 = http://csc.lexum.umontreal.ca/en/2004/2004scc74/2004scc74.html

Taku River Tlingit Framework Agreement = http://ilmbwww.gov.bc.ca/slrp/lrmp/smithers/atlin_taku/index.html#background

Yukon Native Language Centre = http://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/ynlc/YNLCinfo/Tlingit.html

List of Interviews

Carlick, Wayne (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, British Columbia, July 9th, 2007.

Gordon, Louise. (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, BC, June 26th, 2006.

Jack, Sandra (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, BC, September 8th, 2006.

Noskey, Arthur (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. February 23rd, 2007. Loon Lake, Alberta.

Noskey, Jerry. (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. May 23rd, 2007. Red Earth Creek, Alberta.

Tizỳa, Valerie (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. September 11th, 2006. Atlin, British Columbia.

Ward, Kenny. (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. September 6th, 2007. Loon Lake, Alberta.

Chapter Two : *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres*: Un projet de revitalisation linguistique par le jeu[1]

Introduction

La revitalisation linguistique n'est pas un concept nouveau. Néanmoins, plusieurs langues se trouvent actuellement dans une situation précaire, malgré de nombreux efforts déployés pour les revitaliser, les renforcer, et les maintenir. Les descriptions linguistiques des langues minoritaires et indigènes abondent, mais elles s'avèrent insuffisantes pour prévenir la disparition linguistique. Ce n'est que lorsque les projets d'aménagement ont l'appui de la communauté au sein de laquelle ils interviennent que de véritables changements linguistiques sont envisageables. Depuis les années quatre-vingt-dix, les efforts visant à mettre un frein à la disparition des langues ont fait l'objet d'une documentation de plus en plus impressionnante (Walsh, 2005; Hinton, 2003), et beaucoup de ces écrits ont porté sur les solutions pratiques visant à faire la promotion de ces langues. Mais la plupart des outils et exercices destinés à l'enseignement de ces langues ont été élaborés à partir de modèles culturels différents de ceux des langues menacées et sont, par conséquent, incompatibles avec les cultures auxquelles ces langues sont inexorablement liées. Le contexte culturel doit donc être au premier plan dans l'élaboration de projets de revitalisation linguistique. Les outils linguistiques doivent aussi pouvoir être utilisés et compris par des membres de la communauté d'horizons variés, les jeunes comme les moins jeunes.

Selon Fishman (1991) et Krauss (1998), les efforts de revitalisation linguistique doivent cibler les enfants, car ils sont plus susceptibles de

[1] A version of this chapter has been published. Schreyer and Gordon 2007. *Anthropologie et Sociétés*. 31(1): 143-162

transmettre la langue aux générations futures s'ils réussissent à la parler couramment. En effet, selon Krauss, la langue n'est à l'abri des pressions de la langue dominante que lorsqu'elle est apprise comme langue maternelle (1998). Cependant, la plupart du temps, les langues menacées sont dans la salle de classe ou dans d'autres situations comparables d'enseignement formel. Dans les circonstances, il se peut que les outils utilisés pour l'enseignement de la langue aux enfants ne leur permettent pas d'apprendre de façon amusante ou socialement appropriée, ce qui rend la tâche de l'apprentissage d'autant plus difficile.

En essayant de nous éloigner de ces écueils de la revitalisation linguistique, nous discuterons dans cet article de la conceptualisation et de l'utilisation de *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres* [2], un jeu de société éducatif sur les noms de lieux. Ce jeu développé par des membres de la communauté de la Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River (PNTTR) dans le cadre d'un projet communautaire de revitalisation linguistique intègre les toponymes qui sont propres à la communauté[3], les histoires qui se rattachent à ces lieux, les ressources qui s'y trouvent et de l'information sur le territoire traditionnel de la Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River. Pour ce faire, nous commencerons par situer la Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River ainsi que la langue tlingit à l'intérieur de la communauté. Par la suite, nous discuterons de l'importance des noms de lieux en tant que ressources culturelles pour la communauté. Nous esquisserons également l'élaboration du jeu à partir d'un

[2] En discutant du jeu avec des membres de la communauté, nous avons convenu qu'un nom approprié devrait refléter le parcours des jeunes à travers le territoire de la Première Nation Tlingit en se servant de leur connaissance de la terre. Clayton Carlick est responsable du nom "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths" que nous traduisons ici par *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres*. Nom officiel en Tlingit : *Haa shagóon itx yaa ntoo.aat.*

[3] Ceux-ci ne correspondent que rarement aux désignations toponymiques officielles du gouvernement provincial.

corpus de noms de lieux et d'histoires recueillis dans le cadre d'un voyage en compagnie d'une aînée de la communauté autour du lac Atlin. Enfin, nous discuterons de l'utilisation actuelle du jeu au sein de la communauté et de l'importance du jeu dans l'apprentissage d'une langue à partir d'exemples tirés d'autres situations d'apprentissage linguistique en contexte minoritaire.

La Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River (PNTTR)

Plusieurs communautés tlingits sont réparties sur le territoire nord-américain, il s'en trouve au sud-ouest de l'Alaska, dans le sud du Yukon et dans le nord-ouest de la Colombie-Britannique. Le territoire traditionnel de la Première Nation Tinglit de Taku River s'étend du Yukon à la Colombie-Britannique en remontant la rivière Taku jusqu'à la côte de l'Alaska. Alors que jadis, les membres de la communauté parcouraient fréquemment le territoire en chassant ou en faisant la cueillette, la ville d'Atlin en Colombie-Britannique est depuis ce temps devenue le centre de la communauté. À l'origine, Atlin était un camp d'été pour les Tinglits qui venaient pêcher sur le lac Atlin. En tlingit, Atlin se traduit par *Weinaa* qui veut dire alcalin ou « le caribou y venait pour la pierre à lécher » en langue tlingit (Nyman and Leer, 1993). Avec la ruée vers l'or de 1898, les Tlingits ont commencé à partager la région avec les mineurs.

La communauté compte environ 372 personnes (INAC profils des communautés, 2006). Néanmoins, rares sont ceux qui parlent couramment le tlingit et ils sont nombreux à considérer que la langue est menacée. À titre

d'exemple, dans son analyse des langues autochtones du Canada en 1998[4], Norris écrivait que le tlingit était « l'une des plus petites familles de langues. Au Canada, seulement 145 personnes l'ont comme langue maternelle » (Norris, 1998 : 9). Parallèlement dès 1991, Kinkade (1991) classait le tlingit dans la catégorie des langues menacées, et le recensement de Statistique Canada de 1996 rapportait que l'âge moyen de ceux qui avaient une connaissance du tlingit était de 45.5 ans (voir Norris, 1998 : 13).

La situation est plus grave en Colombie-Britannique qu'au Yukon et en Alaska. Selon l'institut des langues Yinka Dene en Colombie-Britannique (BC Yinça Dene Language Institute - 2006), des 575 locuteurs natifs du tlingit vivant aux Canada et aux États-Unis en 1995, seulement vingt habitent en Colombie-Britannique, où se trouve la Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River. Depuis, la population périclite avec le décès de certains aînés. D'après l'échelle des langues menacées de Bauman, la langue tlingit se classe comme menacée puisque moins de cinquante pourcent des adultes âgés de plus de trente ans la parlent (Bauman, 1980). Même si les membres de la communauté de la Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River (PNTTR) n'apprennent plus la langue tlingit comme langue maternelle, ils s'en servent dans plusieurs contextes : panneaux d'affichage, toponymes, et chants traditionnels. Les panneaux de signalisation routière en tlingit – *Tlèyê* (Arrêt) et *Kagênáxh Ya_Gakhuxh* (cédez le passage) ont fait leur apparition à la fin des années 1990, at les panneaux d'affichage avec les noms de rues de la réserve en tlingit ont été installés en 2003. La troupe de danse tlingit de Taku River a vu le jour

[4] Alors que des données récentes sont disponibles sur la population de la Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River, les données démo-linguistiques du recensement de 2001 ne sont pas disponibles. Même si l'enquête auprès des peuples autochtones de 2001 contient des informations tirées des données du recensement, celles-ci ne sont pas disponibles pour la Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River (TRTFN)

en 2006 même si certains membres de la troupe avaient déjà dansé au sein d'autres trroupes à Carcross, Teslin (des communautés tlingits au Yukon) et à Vancouver. La troupe de danse TRTFN (Taku River Tinglit First Nation) s'est rendue à Juneau en Alaska pour participer aux célébrations du Sealaska Heritage Institute en juin 2006. La communauté participe directement aux efforts de revitalisation de sa langue et travaille activement à l'élaboration de programmes d'enseignement de la langue. Le jeu *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres* ne constitue qu'un exemple de projets parmi plusieurs que la communauté a lancés.

Traditionnellement, le peuple tlingit de Taku River s'est servi de son territoire pour assurer sa subsistance et sa survie à travers la chasse, la pêche et la cueillette de ressources alimentaires. Dans le résumé de *Ha Tlatgi – Ha Kustiyi* (nos terres – nos modes de vie) un document sur leur vision et leur gestion du territoire publié par le ministère des Terres et des Ressources, les membres de la PNTTR écrivaient

> À travers les âges, notre peuple s'est assuré que notre territoire avec sa faune et sa flore soit maintenu en santé. En retour, ces terres ont assuré notre survie en tant que peuple et en tant que nation. (TRTFN. 2003 : 1)

Il est évident que le peuple tlingit entretient une relation de proximité avec ses terres. Lorsque le projet minier de Tulsequah Chief dans le nord-ouest de la Colombie-Britannique et Redfern Resources ont voulu construire un chemin minier à travers le territoire - ce qui aurait eu des conséquences désastreuses sur l'environnement - les membres de la PNTTR se sont défendus lorsque la province de la Colombie-Britannique les a traînés devant les tribunaux. La cause s'est rendue jusqu'en Cour suprême et, même si la communauté a perdu le procès, elle sait qu'elle a créé un précédent qui profitera à d'autres

premières nations du Canada et elle continue de se battre pour protéger ses terres et son mode de vie. John Ward, porte-parole de la Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River pendant le procès[5], affirmait après la décision du juge : « Nous ne saurons être séparés de nos terres, et cette décision n'y changera rien. Nous, les membres de la nation tlingit de Taku River continuerons d'être les responsables de notre territoire, comme nous l'avons toujours été. » (Ward 2004)

Le document sur la Vision et la Gestion précise aussi que « la gestion et la planification de l'utilisation des terres devront être enracinées dans les concepts et les valeurs tlingits et celles-ci devront porter l'empreinte de la langue tlingit » (TRTFN, 2003 : 16). De plus, un des objectifs du PNTTR décrit dans la section portant sur la gestion du patrimoine et des valeurs culturelles est de « sensibiliser la population aux valeurs culturelles et patrimoniales et promouvoir l'utilisation de la langue tlingit » (TRTFN, 2003 : 70). Ce document, tout comme les noms de lieux en tlingit, témoigne du lien qui unit la langue au territoire. C'est pour cette raison qu'il nous a semblé important et tout à fait logique de lier ces deux concepts dans le jeu *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres.*. En raison de la relation particulière qui unit le peuple tlingit à la terre, l'utilisation de noms de lieux dans un projet d'apprentissage et de revitalisation linguistique permet une mise en contexte des concepts de la langue tlingit que le cadre formel de la salle de classe ne permet pas. Puisque les êtres humains sont toujours situés dans un lieu précis, le lieu est une composante essentielle de la culture. Par conséquent, les noms de lieux constituent un outil important d'apprentissage. Selon Escobar,

[5] John Ward était le porte-parole des Tlingits de Taku River pour la durée de l'affaire Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River c. Colombie-Britannique (Directeur d'évaluation de projet), 2004 CSC 74

« compte tenu de la prédominance d'une perception incarnée, toujours nous nous retrouvons dans des lieux » (2001 : 143).

Pour Thomas Thornton, les noms de lieux tlingit en Alaska sont la pierre angulaire de l'éducation culturelle. Il affirme que :

> L'enseignement de la langue centré sur le lieu part de la réalisation que pour les peuples autochtones, les terres traditionnelles et les ressources qui s'y trouvent sont leur ressource principale, une ressource qui leur fournit à la fois la nourriture, l'éducation et l'inspiration dont ils ont besoin pour se nourrir depuis des siècles sinon des millénaires. Ce genre d'enseignement reconnaît que les langues autochtones naissent des interactions prolongées avec des paysages et des territoires particuliers et que ces interactions sont commémorées et intégrées dans des noms de lieux, dans des narrations du lieu et autres genres du lieu. (Thornton, 2003 : 34)

Même si Thornton s'est surtout intéressé aux Tlingits du sud-est de l'Alaska, le mode de vie des Tlingits de Taku River en Colombie-Britannique ressemble beaucoup à celui des Tlingits de l'Alaska.. Eux aussi dépendent de la terre pour combler leurs besoins physiques (alimentaires) mais aussi culturels. Néanmoins, les noms de lieux et les narrations du lieu sont propres à chaque communauté. Par conséquent, la langue qu'ils nous apprennent sera elle aussi propre et unique à chacune de ces communautés.

Sur les traces des ancêtres pour *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres*

L'idée de créer un jeu de société à partir de l'utilisation du territoire dans la communauté qui pourrait être utilisé dans les cours de langue des enfants avait été proposée aux Tlingits de Taku River en janvier 2005 dans une lettre adressée par Christine Schreyer au Conseil des Premières Nations du Yukon [6]. Schreyer offrait de travailler à titre de bénévole dans une

[6] L'idée d'un jeu de société pour apprendre la langue est née de conversations entre Michelle Daveluy (professeure associée en anthropologie linguistique au Département d'anthropologie de l'University of Alberta), Sheila Greer (consultante en archéologie qui œuvre auprès de

communauté des premières nations pour pouvoir y mener sa recherche de doctorat. La lettre a été transmise à Louise Gordon, directrice au ministère des Terres et des Ressources pour la Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River, qui s'est tout de suite intéressée à l'idée d'un jeu de société sur les noms de lieux du territoire tlingit de la rivière Taku, surtout autour du lac Atlin. Incidemment, Gordon avait elle aussi déjà eu l'idée de se servir d'un jeu de société pour enseigner la langue. Ensemble Schreyer et Gordon se sont mises à élaborer l'idée du jeu de société et à réfléchir à sa construction. L'été 2005 était l'échéance fixée pour l'achèvement d'un prototype pour que le jeu puisse être présenté à la communauté et plus précisément aux enfants dans le cadre du camp annuel culturel de la PNTTR avec l'aide de l'aînée Antonia Jack, la grand-mère de Gordon qui parlait couramment le tlingit (Figure 3).

Le mode de vie des Tlingits est profondément ancré dans la communauté et il mise sur la coopération. Par conséquent, la culture tlingit accorde davantage d'importance au groupe qu'à l'individu même si les contributions individuelles à la communauté sont toujours valorisées. Les aînés sont respectés puisqu'ils sont les gardiens des traditions orales, de la culture et de la langue qu'ils transmettent aux générations futures. L'aîné occupe une position de grande responsabilité à l'intérieur de la communauté. Antonia Jack, aînée reconnue et respectée dans la communauté, a travaillé fort pour transmettre les traditions orales, la langue et la culture à la prochaine génération du peuple tlingit, dont Louise Gordon. Pour transmettre les traditions orales à sa famille, Antonia Jack a dû investir beaucoup de son temps et de ses énergies à l'élaboration d'activités susceptibles de faciliter la

---

communautés des premières nations au Yukon depuis plusieurs années) et Christine Schreyer. Louise Gordon avait elle aussi de son côté réfléchi à la possibilité de créer un jeu de société.

transmission des connaissances à la prochaine génération. Naomi Mitcham, qui était à l'époque agente du Patrimoine pour la PNTTR, raconte l'enthousiasme d'Antonia à faire partie du voyage autour du lac Atlin en 1999 pour y enregistrer sur place les noms de lieux que les générations plus jeunes pourraient utiliser. Mitcham cite Antonia qui avait dit : « nous allons retracer les pas des ancêtres tout autour du lac Atlin » (Mitcham 1999 : 2). Malgré son âge, Antonia, (elle avait alors 85 ans) et sa vue qui déclinait, Antonia a aussi aidé à monter et à défaire le camp à chaque fois que le groupe s'arrêtait pour la nuit. Au retour du groupe en ville, elle tambourinait au son de la mélodie qu'elle chantait en tlingit (Mitcham, 1999 : 50). Lés noms recueillis alors qu'Antonia retraçait les pas de ses ancêtres sont à la base du jeu de société *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres*.

Antonia Jack souhabitait aussi vivement enseigner aux enfants de la communauté. En 1969, elle est devenue éducatrice au centre communautaire Yukon Hall et s'est occupée d'un groupe de garçons qui ont souvent mis sa patience à rude épreuve (Schreyer 2005, notes de terrain). Elle était aussi très active dans l'enseignement de la langue tlingit et avait elle-même monté beaucoup de son propre matériel pour enseigner le tlingit de façon amusante.

Figure Four: Madame Jack, photo prise à la boutique Inside Passage Arts Skagway, Alaska 2005

Elle-même survivante des pensionnats autochtones, Antonia avait à un moment donné perdu sa langue. Ce n'est qu'en écoutant les membres de la famille de son mari – qu'elle aimait beaucoup - se parler en tlingit qu'Antonia a été en mesure de retrouver les compétences linguistiques qu'elle avait perdues (Schreyer 2005). Malheureusement, au fil des années, nombre des outils qu'elle avait élaborés se sont égarés. Antonia était donc d'autant plus intéressée au jeu *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres* qu'elle tenait à ce que ses connaissances des noms de lieux tlingits et des ressources du territoire soient transmises aux générations futures. Pendant l'élaboration du jeu à l'été 2005, elle a entrepris d'enseigner aux enfants les noms tlingits de plusieurs espèces de poissons qui constituent des ressources alimentaires importantes pour les Tlingits. Antonia s'est beaucoup investie dans l'aspect du jeu de

mémorisation des noms de poissons, et elle a inventé de nouvelles activités de son cru à partir de celles mises sur pied par Christine Schreyer pour faciliter l'apprentissage de la langue par les enfants (Schreyer 2005, notes de terrain). Antonia était convaincue que les enfants apprendraient la langue plus facilement s'ils devaient le faire d' eux-mêmes et s'ils pouvaient y découvrir une utilité pratique, comme dans le jeu (Schreyer, 2005, notes de terrain).

L'objectif du jeu est d'arriver à traverser le territoire en essayant d'acquérir cinq différentes ressources, - en lançant le dé, ce qui incorpore des éléments de hasard dans le jeu, - et de revenir en ville le premier. Chaque fois qu'un joueur acquiert une ressource, il doit prononcer le nom de la ressource en tlingit. Parallèlement, chaque fois qu'un joueur atterrit sur une aire qui est associée à un nom de lieu, il doit prononcer ce nom de lieu à voix haute en tlingit. À la fin du jeu, lorsque le joueur est rentré en ville, il doit répéter le nom de toutes les ressources en tlingit ainsi que le nom de tous les lieux sur lesquels il a atterri pendant le jeu. D'après les essais menés auprès des jeunes à l'été 2005, il apparaît évident que le jeu remplit une fonction ludique outre la fonction éducative - les joueurs essayant de recueillir les ressources qui leur plaisaient alors même que d'autres ressources se trouvaient plus proches de leur position dans le jeu.

Tout au long du jeu, il est possible d'enrichir le vocabulaire tlingit des participants en y ajoutant de nouvelles phrases encore plus complexes. En effet, pendant les essais de l'été 2006, on constatait déjà l'apparition de nouvelles occasions d'utilisation du tlingit dans le jeu (Figure 4). Par exemple, les participants comptaient leur déplacement sur la planche de jeu en tlingit, donnaient le chiffre sur le dé en tlingit et s'interrogeaient les uns les autres en

disant « *Dáa sáwé?* » (qu'est-ce que c'est) et en acquiesçant « *Aaá* » (oui) en tlingit lorsque le joueur prononçait correctement les mots. Les élèves commençaient également à essayer de lire les mots en tlingit sur les cartes de mémoire. De nouvelles phrases en tlingit pourraient éventuellement s'ajouter au jeu, posant ainsi un défi supplémentaire pour les élèves au fur et à mesure que leurs compétences linguistiques progressent.

Le jeu de société *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres* comprend une carte géographique du territoire traditionnel de la PNTTR, des cartes de noms de lieux, des cartes de ressources, un dé et des pions que les joueurs déplaceront sur la planche de jeu ou sur la carte. Le prototype du jeu a été élaboré à partir de six cartes du gouvernement fédéral à une échelle de 1 : 250 000 (105D, 105C, 104M, 104N, 104K et 104L réalisées entre 1988 et 1996 par le ministère de l'Énergie, des Mines et des Ressources) qui ont été fusionnées pour former le territoire de la PNTTR[7]. Une fois les cartes fusionnées, l'anglais a été effacé de la plus grosse carte afin d'amener à penser en termes de noms de lieux tlingits et de lieux importants. La grille des cartes du gouvernement a été maintenue comme grille du jeu et les couleurs de la carte ont été ombragées pour que les joueurs puissent plus facilement reconnaître les distinctions entre étendues de terre et étendues d'eau, montagnes et champs de glace, et s'orienter en conséquence sur la planche de jeu.

Les premiers essais du jeu nous ont permis de constater que pour pouvoir rattacher des noms de lieux à une région, nous avions besoin d'une plus grande carte. Ceci relève du fait que les noms de lieux tlingits sont

[7] Notons qu'afin de produire une carte représentant la totalité du territoire traditionnel de la PNTTR on a dû avoir recours à six cartes. Ceci démontre jusqu'à quel point l'opinion du gouvernement canadien sur le territoire diffère de celle de la Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River.

souvent densément répartis (voir Thornton, 1997). Étant donné que la carte originale couvrait l'étendue du territoire traditionnel de la PNTTR, soit 18 000 kilomètres carrés, ce qui était sans doute trop pour les apprenants, nous avons choisi de nous concentrer plutôt sur la région du lac Atlin pour le jeu de société. Cependant, cela n'empêche en rien l'élaboration à l'avenir d'autres projets représentant d'autres parties du territoires. Les cartes sont souvent utilisées dans la communauté tlingit de Taku River pour l'orientation sur le territoire, pour la gestion de l'utilisation du territoire et pour indiquer des sites patrimoniaux et des sentiers. Elle recouvrent la quasi-totalité des murs du bureau du conseil de bande de Taku River. Les enfants se sont montrés très intéressés par la carte et, pendant qu'ils jouaient, nous leur avons demandé s'ils reconnaissaient la carte et s'ils arrivaient à s'y retrouver. Non seulement ils étaient capables de reconnaître les régions, mais ils arrivaient également à désigner d'autres lieux sur la carte qu'ils reconnaissaient comme la rivière Taku et le chemin qui mène à Whitehorse et la montagne *K'iyán*[8].

En plus du nom de lieu écrit en tlingit[9], une photographie représentant le lieu décorait les cartes de noms de lieux. Les photographies sur les cartes servaient d'indices visuels au sens des mots en tlingit pour les joueurs. Par exemple, Teresa Island qui est sur le lac Atlin s'appelle *Jaanwu X'áat'i* (Goat Island ou île de la chèvre) en tlingit (Nyman et Leer, 1993). La carte pour ce nom de lieu porte le nom tlingit sur le devant avec une photographie d'une

[8] La montagne K'iyán (Jubilee ou Minto Mountain en anglais) est une borne du territoire tlingit de Taku River au nord et est associée au clan du loup

[9] Suivant les recommandations du conseil des aînés, la PNTTR adoptait une résolution au printemps 2006 comme quoi tout le matériel linguistique créé par la PNTTR et utilisé par elle doit être rédigé en respectant l'orthographe standard du dialecte tlingit de la côte ou de l'Alaska, dont l'usage est répandu au Sealaska Heritage Institute. La résolution avait été prise en fonction de toute une gamme de facteurs qui ne seront pas discutés ici (Voir Chapter Four). L'adoption de cette résolution rend nécessaire la modification de la graphie des noms de lieux sur les cartes du prototype. Les nouvelles cartes de noms de lieux devront être vérifiées et, s'il y a lieu, corrigées par des gens qui parlent et lisent le dialecte.

chèvre des montagnes comme il y a en a partout sur le territoire de la Première Nation Tlingit. De la même façon, la carte pour la montagne *K'iyán* qui veut dire « des pruches tout autour du pied de la montagne » en tlingit (Nyman and Leer) est illustrée par une photo de la montagne. Gordon tenait à ce que les images soient de vraies photographies et non pas des illustrations ou des images genre bande dessinée pour que les enfants puissent faire le lien entre ce qu'ils apprennent et ce qu'ils voient et leur environnement. Les traductions en anglais des noms de lieux et/ou le nom « officiel » sont inscrits à l'endos des cartes de lieux.

Même si les noms tlingits étaient traditionnellement des dispositifs mnémoniques pour des histoires et légendes du territoire, ce savoir, à l'instar de la langue tlingit, est en voie de disparition. Elizabeth Nyman a inclus quelques-unes de ces histoires rattachées aux noms de lieux dans son livre écrit en collaboration avec le linguiste Jeff Leer, et certains aînés les connaissent encore. Néanmoins, pour les générations actuelles, nombre d'histoires associées aux noms de lieux relatent leurs expériences personnelles plutôt que des histoires de source mythique ou historique. Même les enfants étaient en mesure de fournir des histoires associant leurs propres expériences avec certains des lieux autour du lac Atlin à partir des lieux qui figuraient sur la carte du jeu. Le jeu intergénérationnel, que le jeu de société a comme mission d'encourager et de favoriser, permet l'intégration à la mémoire de chaque joueur de nouvelles histoires rattachées aux noms de lieux. .

Parallèlement, des photographies des ressources qui sont importantes pour la culture tlingit ornent les cartes ressources du jeu. Ici encore, ces représentations sont des photographies d'animaux et de plantes avec le nom

tlingit de la ressource sur le devant de la carte. La traduction en anglais figure à l'endos de la carte. Dans le prototype original, utilisé à l'été 2004, les cartes ressources portaient essentiellement sur les ressources marines (les poissons). À l'été 2006, de petits et de gros animaux ainsi que des baies se sont ajoutés aux ressources du jeu. En y jouant, nous avons compris que les cases sur la grille de la carte de la planche de jeu devraient porter des photos correspondant aux cartes ressources pour indiquer où les joueurs peuvent tenter d'amasser les ressources en se servant du dé. L'emplacement de ces cases ressources sur la carte de la planche sera déterminé selon le savoir traditionnel écologique du peuple tlingit de Taku River. L'idée du dé a été empruntée à d'autres jeux contemporains qui sont populaires au sein de la communauté, tels que *Risque* et *Monopoly*. Enfin même si les pions employés dans le prototype sont également empruntés à d'autres jeux contemporains, nous souhaitons à l'avenir fabriquer des pions en bois sculptés ou peints qui représentent les différentes maison des clans qui font partie de la culture tlingit dont les maisons de la corneille *Kookhittaan*, *Deisheetaan* (du castor), *Léeneidí* (du saumon kéta), *Ishkeetaan (de la grenouille)*, et la maison du loup *Yan Yeidí*)[10]

[10] Au fur et à mesure que l'acquisition du tlingit progresse, on pourrait éventuellement ajouter dans des versions ultérieures du jeu la territorialité des clans pour l'acquisition des ressources, les contraintes saisonnières et les moyens de transport utilisés (d'après une suggestion de Clayton Carlick). Pour l'instant, le jeu ne s'est pas concentré sur ces aspects.

Figure Five : Enfants tlingits de Taku River jouant à
Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres

On aura sans doute deviné à partir de cette description qu'un locuteur du tlingit doit être présent initialement pour enseigner aux joueurs la bonne prononciation des mots et les histoires qui se rattachent aux lieux ainsi que pour les guider dans des utilisations plus complexes de la langue. En 2005, Antonia Jack était présente pour aider les enfants (âgés entre 4 et 10 ans) à jouer. Avant de commencer le jeu, elle a révisé avec eux les mots tlingits et leur a dit qu'ils devaient apprendre les mots pour jouer (Schreyer, 2005 notes de terrain). Antonia est décédée le 3 février 2006, mais avant sa mort, elle était toujours aussi intéressée par ce projet qu'elle croyait capable d'aider les plus jeunes générations du peuple tlingit à en apprendre davantage sur leurs terres et leur langue. Le jeu a bénéficié de son apport et c'est avec beaucoup de respect que lui sera dédiée la version finale du jeu, alors même que les responsabilités d'enseigner les us et coutumes tlingits et les traditions orales seront transférées à la génération suivante.

Le jeu de société a été à nouveau mis à l'essai pendant son élaboration à l'été 2006[11], mais pour diverses raisons, nommément le décès de Madame Jack l'hiver précédent, aucun locuteur de tlingit n'a pu être présent pour l'essai. Midori Kirby, une des monitrices de langue de la communauté, qui est elle-même toujours en train d'apprendre le tlingit, était tout de même présente pour aider avec la prononciation de base[12]. À Atlin, où les locuteurs du tlingit sont peu nombreux, il est souvent difficile d'en trouver un quand les gens veulent jouer . Il serait possible de résoudre le problème de l'absence de locuteur en ayant recours à un disque compact. Celui-ci est présentement en train d'être mis au point à partir d'entretiens réalisés auprès d'aînés tlingits de Taku River. La communauté considère également la possibilité de produire une version sur cédérom ou en ligne du jeu pour permettre aux gens d'apprendre la langue seuls, sans l'apport d'un locuteur natif. La carte du jeu de société sera affichée avec les photos des lieux et des ressources de la région dans la version électronique du jeu. Grâce entre autres à des enregistrements sonores d'aînés, surtout d'Antonia Jack, prononçant les noms de lieux en tlingit, la version électronique aura une composante interactive. Ces clips sonores seront accessibles lorsque les utilisateurs cliqueront sur un lieu

[11] Le jeu a été essayé à deux reprises en 2006 au cours du camp culturel dans le cadre de son élaboration, une fois avec des enfants plus vieux (entre 8 à 12 ans) et une autre fois avec des enfants plus jeunes (entre 4 et 7 ans). Étant donné les différences dans les modes d'apprentissage, les pièces du jeu avaient été adaptées pour enseigner aux différents groupes d'âges. Les enfants plus vieux qui sont capables d'une attention prolongée étaient à l'aise avec le genre d'apprentissage que leur offrait la planche de jeu. Néanmoins, les plus petits apprenaient mieux en se servant des cartes du jeu d'une façon plus active. Valérie Tizya, Brenda Williams et Christine Schreyer ont aussi fait des essais du jeu tout au long de son élaboration en 2006.

[12] Midori Kirby, qui est originaire du Japon, apprend le tlingit, la langue ancestrale de son mari et de ses enfants. Elle a été très active dans la création d'un programme d'enseignement linguistique pour la communauté. Lorraine Dawson, la nièce d'Antonia Jack, était aussi monitrice de langue pour le camp culturel. Néanmoins, Lorraine était absente le jour où le jeu avait été apporté au camp. Toutefois, elle avait déjà, à une autre occasion, fourni des suggestions pour améliorer le jeu.

particulier. Les noms de ressources et les histoires associées aux lieux pourraient également faire partie de la composante interactive du jeu.

Depuis le début de la conception du jeu, l'intérêt qu'il a suscité au sein de la communauté n'a fait que croître au fur et à mesure que ses membres en apprenaient l'existence. La directrice du camp culturel, Violet Williams, souhaite que le jeu revienne au camp, malgré la difficulté de trouver un locuteur natif parmi les aînés. Notons également que même si l'utilisation du jeu en milieu scolaire est envisageable, *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres* a été élaboré au camp culturel où d'autres activités propres à la culture tlingit sont également enseignées telles que la confection de confiture ou la cuisson du pain bannock, la pose de filets de pêche, les danses et chants traditionnels. Nous espérons aussi qu'une fois le jeu au point, des familles seront prêtes à jouer ensemble. Certains parents se sont déjà montrés intéressés d'en faire une activité familiale. Plus important encore, les enfants étaient intéressés par le jeu et voulaient savoir quand ils pourraient jouer à nouveau.

Les jeux de hasard tels que les jeux de mains font traditionnellement partie de la société tlingit, au même titre que d'autres formes de divertissement comme le chant ou la danse. Des histoires sont racontées par le biais de chansons, de danses et de costumes qui sont créés à ces fins et, souvent, ces histoires sont localisées dans un lieu précis. Un jeu qui porte sur le voyage perpétue cet aspect de la culture tlingit. Il est donc normal que pour gagner un joueur doit être en mesure de décrire les lieux où il est allé dans le jeu et ce qu'il y a fait. Le divertissement à travers les péripéties du jeu et la narration à voix haute constituent deux aspects de *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres* qui assurent la continuité avec les traditions tlingits. Ce dernier point

nous amène à discuter des avantages que représente pour l'apprenant le divertissement dans l'apprentissage des langues.

Jeux et divertissement dans l'apprentissage des langues

Fishman (1991) avait énuméré huit étapes pour renverser une tendance linguistique. Plusieurs de ces étapes se concentraient sur l'enseignement des langues menacées à l'école (Étapes 6 à 4). Néanmoins, pour beaucoup d'Autochtones, les pensionnats autochtones et leur personnel représentent un des facteurs les plus importants dans la quasi-disparition de leurs langues. Il est donc très ironique qu'aujourd'hui plusieurs enfants apprennent leur langue maternelle comme langue seconde à l'école. Les conséquences physiques et émotionnelles des pensionnats autochtones se font toujours sentir chez plusieurs survivants. Par conséquent, afin de surmonter ces souvenirs douloureux, de nouvelles méthodes doivent voir le jour pour que la langue maternelle soit à nouveau perçue sous un meilleur jour comme quelque chose d'amusant à apprendre.

Le divertissement comme méthode d'enseignement était une des idées derrière l'élaboration du jeu *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres*. Cette idée avait aussi été explorée par Broner et Tarone (2001) dans le contexte de l'immersion en espagnol. Ces auteurs affirment que « la composante 'ludique' du jeu linguistique favorise l'acquisition de la langue seconde puisque celle-ci devient amusante ou chargée de valeur affective. Grâce au jeu, les propriétés de L2 se font plus saillantes et par conséquent plus mémorables » (cité dans Smith, 2006). Les deux fois où on a joué à *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres* l'ambiance était amicale et les petits comme les plus grands ont aimé leur expérience du jeu. Souvent, dans le contexte autochtone d'acquisition

d'une langue, les aînés corrigent et taquinent les plus jeunes apprenants. Quoique cette pratique soit culturellement acceptée au sein de la communauté, plusieurs jeunes apprenants peuvent se sentir gênés lorsqu'ils sont la cible de railleries et préférer ne pas parler la langue du tout pour éviter d'être ridiculisés (Hill, 2001). L'ambiance amicale et coopérative du jeu a contribué à créer un climat propice à l'apprentissage intergénérationnel centré sur les besoins de l'apprenant. Dans le contexte de l'apprentissage intergénérationnel, l'apprenant (le plus souvent l'enfant) est en contact avec plusieurs locuteurs qui ont atteint différents niveaux de compétences dans la langue et il apprend à leur contact. Dans son article « The Development of "New" Languages in Native American Communities », Anne Goodfellow se penche sur les changements dans les pratiques linguistiques des plus jeunes générations de locuteurs de kwak'wala en Colombie-Britannique. Elle souligne que « les éducateurs et les chercheurs qui travaillent à la préservation des langues autochtones observent que les élèves ne parlent pas la vraie langue ou la langue pure » (Goodfellow, 2003 : 49). Cependant, elle affirme que pour favoriser le maintien de la langue, l'utilisation courante de la langue au sein de la communauté ne doit pas être négligée au profit de la seule langue classique ou authentique, les deux doivent faire partie de la stratégie de revitalisation. Selon elle, étudier l'usage contemporain de la langue « peut s'avérer amusant pour les élèves… peut-être se sentiront-ils moins gênés d'utiliser cette nouvelle langue dans leurs activités quotidiennes » (Goodfellow, 2003 : 55, italique de l'auteure). De plus en plus, les concepteurs de programmes linguistiques commencent à comprendre l'importance de s'amuser en apprenant une nouvelle langue.

La création d'un jeu de Scrabble en langue dakotah, qui a attiré l'attention des médias récemment, constitue un bon exemple de l'intégration de la composante ludique dans l'apprentissage d'une langue. Le dakotah est la langue du peuple Sioux, et le jeu avait été élaboré par Tammy DeCoteau, la directrice de Language Programs (programmes linguistiques) de l'AAIA (Association on American Indian Affairs). Le premier tournoi de Scrabble Dakotah qui a eu lieu dans le cadre du Dakotah Language Bowl au Dakota Magic Casino tout près de Hakinson dans le Dakota du Nord a été organisé en réponse à la popularité du jeu[13]. On avait prédit la mort de la langue dakota – une langue menacée d'extinction – pour 2025, en même temps que la mort de son dernier locuteur. Néanmoins, Darrell DeCoteau, un membre du conseil scolaire de l'école Enemy Swim Day School avait affirmé : « avec ces initiatives, nous espérons prolonger [l'utilisation du dakotah] » (*Winnipeg Free Press*, le 26 mars 2006). Le tournoi a réuni des équipes venues de communautés du Dakota du Nord, du Dakota du Sud et du Manitoba, permettant par le fait même la création de liens transfrontaliers voués au maintien de la langue. Depuis, un dictionnaire officiel du jeu de scrabble en dakotah a vu le jour avec l'appui officiel de Hasbro, les éditeurs de Scrabble (article du *Winnipeg Free Press*, le 26 mars 2006). Toutes les pièces du jeu de scrabble sont sculptées et taillées à la main par des membres de la tribu dakotah[14] et ils se servent de l'orthographe dakotah standard. L'attention médiatique qu'a suscitée le tournoi de scrabble dakotah a donné lieu à la découverte d'un précédent pour le carrier, une langue autochtone parlée au Nord de la Colombie-Britannique. En 1994, la communauté carrier avait elle

[13] Voir: http://www.indian-affairs.org/languagepreservation.htm, consulté en 2006.
[14] Voir: (http://itre.cis.upenn.edu/~myl/languagelog/archives/002965.html, consulté en 2006.

aussi mis au point un jeu de scrabble dans sa langue[15]. Néanmoins, contrairement au jeu de scrabble dakotah, le jeu en carrier n'avait pas reçu l'appui officiel de Hasbro et, par conséquent, l'initiative n'avait pas été aussi médiatisée.

Le programme « Français actif » du Campus Saint Jean de l'University of Alberta constitue un autre exemple de promotion de l'utilisation d'une langue par l'entremise du divertissement. « Français actif » est « est un programme qui allie des cours de langue dynamiques à des sessions d'activités qui permettent aux gens d'apprendre le français parlé dans un cadre *amusant* et décontracté »[16]. L'idée avait été lancée par le doyen du campus Saint Jean, Marc Arnal, et Hugh Hoyles, le directeur à la retraite des activités récréatives du campus. Au sujet du programme, M. Hoyles affirmait que : «C'est une chose formidable que de pouvoir s'exprimer dans une autre langue et si on est en mesure de rendre l'apprentissage amusant, la courbe d'apprentissage nous semble moins raide. »[17]. Dans ce programme, il nous semble évident que l'accent est mis sur la composante ludique de l'apprentissage.

Enfin, en préparant du matériel éducatif bilingue, Phyllis Morrow et Chase Hensel ont aussi mis au point des jeux destinés à l'enseignement de la langue yupik au sein du district scolaire Lower Kuskokwim de Bethel en Alaska (Morrow 1987). Le jeu en langue yupik « *Pitenqnaqsaraq* » ou « attraper et acquérir des choses » est semblable à *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres*. Selon Morrow, le jeu est utilisé pour « favoriser chez l'élève l'acquisition de connaissances de base du cycle de subsistance historique du

[15] Voir: http://itre.cis.upenn.edu/~myl/languagelog/archives/002968.html, consulté en 2006.
[16] Voir: http://www.cjs.ualberta.ca/cerf/Description.htm, consulté en 2006 (nos italiques).
[17] Voir: www.expressnews.ualberta.ca/article.cfm?id=7510, le 2 août 2006 (nos italiques)

peuple Yupik et des ressources contemporaines de leur propre village. » (Morrow, 1987 : 204). Elle affirme que le jeu met l'accent sur la relation entre les valeurs économiques et culturelles.

Dans chacun de ces exemples, la composante ludique ressort comme un facteur important du processus d'apprentissage. Dans *Pitenqnaqsaraq* et *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres* plus précisément, l'accent qui est mis sur le divertissement est étroitement lié à la pertinence du jeu par rapport aux activités culturelles. Nous comptons approfondir cet aspect dans la section qui suit.

La pertinence dans l'acquisition linguistique

Souvent les langues deviennent menacées de par leur contact prolongé avec d'autres langues et cultures coloniales qui les influencent de diverses façons. Par conséquent, les projets de revitalisation linguistique doivent faire appel à des concepts et des mots qui ont une pertinence pour la culture à laquelle appartient la langue menacée. Dans sa thèse de doctorat *Making the Best of Two Worlds : An Anthropological Approach to the Development of Bilingual Education Materials in Southwestern Alaska*, Phyllis Morrow raconte son expérience dans l'élaboration de matériel pédagogique bilingue. Elle souligne que pour que le matériel soit efficace, les étudiants doivent eux-mêmes constater la nécessité de parler la langue et que « l'on apprend une langue pour pouvoir communiquer avec des gens et l'on communique avec des gens parce qu'on a quelque chose d'important à dire et/ou quelque chose d'important à apprendre » (Morrow, 1987 : 141). Ces deux facteurs - la nécessité et la pertinence – sont intimement liés dans le contexte de l'immersion puisqu'on y ressent le besoin d'apprendre la langue pour pouvoir

communiquer et parce que l'apprentissage se concentre sur ce qui est pertinent à une conversation donnée.

Souvent le matériel d'enseignement destiné aux enfants est élaboré à partir de contes et de chansons que les enfants connaissent dans la langue dominante et qui sont simplement traduits dans la langue menacée sans considération pour la pertinence de ces chansons et contes pour la culture où on les importe. Rob Amery qui a travaillé à la revitalisation de la langue karuna des Plaines d'Adelaïde en Australie fait état du problème de la traduction des histoires à partir d'une langue et d'un contexte culturel dans un autre contexte et une autre langue. Il est l'auteur d'une traduction en langue karuna d'un conte pour enfant *Tucker's Mob* (Mattingley 1992). En commentant son propre travail de traduction, il affirme que « puisque l'histoire se déroule dans un contexte géographique avec un climat très différent, j'ai dû composer avec des réalités étrangères comme des bananiers et des patates douces pour lesquelles il n'existe évidemment pas d'équivalent en langue karuna dans les sources traditionnelles » (Amery, 2001 : 192). L'absence de ces mots dans le vocabulaire karuna pose problème non seulement pour la traduction, mais aussi pour la compréhension du texte, puisque les enfants karunas n'auront jamais vu ni vécu ces réalités pour lesquelles il n'existe pas d'équivalent dans leur langue.

George Fulford fait état des mêmes lacunes du matériel d'enseignement destiné à une communauté crie du Nord de l'Ontario. Même si ce programme est destiné à l'enseignement de l'anglais à des enfants qui sont déjà compétents en cri, les mots qu'ils apprennent en anglais ne sont pas non

plus rattachés à des concepts qui sont pertinents pour eux ou pour leurs valeurs culturelles. Au sujet du matériel didactique, Fulford écrit :

> Comment, par exemple, un élève de cette communauté crie interprèterait-il une phrase comme celle-ci « Finding shrimp in *his* billfold upsets my father » ou celle-ci « our pet aardvark is wild *about* orange sherbet ». Il existe sûrement de meilleures façons d'enseigner le sens des mots *his* et *about*. Étant donné que la crevette et l'oryctérope ne font pas partie des réalités de la vie quotidienne sur la Baie James, le fait d'introduire ces mots inusités entraîne probablement un certain degré de dissonance cognitive dans le cerveau des élèves, rendant ainsi plus difficile leur maîtrise du mot cible. (Fulford, 1997 : 6)

Si l'on continue à exiger que les élèves apprennent des mots qui n'ont aucune pertinence pour eux, comment pouvons-nous nous attendre à ce qu'ils aiment ce qu'ils apprennent et prennent goût à la langue?

Le programme Maître - Apprenti (Master-Apprentice) créé par Leanne Hinton constitue un exemple de programme d'immersion fructueux dans le contexte d'une langue en danger de disparition. Dans ce programme, la relation entre le besoin que peut combler la langue et la pertinence des sujets traités est au premier plan. Hinton décrit ainsi les principes centraux du programme :

1) L'anglais n'est pas toléré, le maître locuteur doit tenter d'utiliser sa langue en tout temps en présence de l'apprenti alors que celui-ci doit employer la langue pour poser des questions et répondre aux questions du maître…
2) L'apprentissage se fait dans des situations concrètes et réelles de la vie quotidienne… (Hinton, 2001 : 218)

Le premier point concerne le besoin d'utiliser et de comprendre la langue, tandis que le second illustre l'importance de la pertinence de la langue dans la vie quotidienne de l'apprenant.

Dans le contexte de l'apprentissage - en dehors de l'immersion - d'une langue menacée, la pertinence et le besoin ou la nécessité sont tout aussi

importants. Pour l'apprenant, le besoin ou la pertinence d'apprendre une liste de mots par cœur en vue d'un test éventuel peuvent ne pas paraître évidents. Robert Leavitt, qui a œuvré au sein de plusieurs communautés à l'élaboration de programmes de langue malécite et micmac dans les provinces maritimes du Canada, exprimait les mêmes réserves au sujet de l'apprentissage de la langue dans le contexte d'une salle de classe. Il affirme que les enseignant(e)s devraient :

> [...]concevoir la salle de classe comme un espace où[…]la langue autochtone (ou maternelle) quelle qu'elle soit, est utilisée à des fins précises, en contexte, dans le but de partager des idées. Il doit y avoir des situations significatives, vraies ou imitées dans lesquelles la parole joue un rôle fonctionnel. Les exercices et la mémorisation, les exercices de vocabulaire et de phrases et les analyses de mots doivent suivre et non pas précéder la parole. (Leavitt, 1987 : 171)

L'apprentissage d'une langue pour exécuter une tâche, telle que jouer, rend l'apprentissage nécessaire et justifié. Ainsi dans le jeu *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres*, la langue est pertinente non seulement pour la culture tlingit mais aussi dans l'expérience des joueurs. Les enfants qui y ont participé étaient très disposés à partager leurs expériences du territoire, par exemple où ils avaient voyagé et ce qu'ils y avaient vu et vécu. Ils ont également raconté des histoires se rattachant aux ressources trouvées sur l'étendue du territoire traditionnel, ce qu'ils avaient mangé ou cuisiné et ce qu'ils aiment et ce qu'ils n'aiment pas. Leavitt est partisan de l'utilisation d'exemples qui s'inspirent des expériences des enfants dans l'enseignement des langues. Il écrit que :

> [Les enseignant(e)s] doivent partir de ce que les enfants savent et connaissent. L'impression que les enfants se font des gens et des autres êtres vivant autour d'eux est un élément important de leur sentiment d'appartenance au lieu. Par exemple, les animaux semblent être un des sujets préférés dans les programmes de langue autochtone. Néanmoins, trop souvent les animaux sont malheureusement enseignés ou présentés de façon inappropriée, dans des listes de vocabulaire par exemple. Les enfants doivent pouvoir parler des animaux en contexte. Les légendes,

> la chasse ou les activités du trappeur, la préparation et la cuisson de la viande et les activités entourant les soins des animaux domestiques et des bestiaux fournissent autant de raisons d'utiliser la langue et autant de concepts que les enfants peuvent exprimer (Leavitt, 1987 : 169).

Quand l'apprentissage de la langue est pertinent pour l'apprenant, celle-ci devient intimement liée à ses propres expériences. L'apprenant se rappelle ainsi plus facilement ce qu'il a appris et il est davantage en mesure de s'en servir.

Conclusion

Les membres de la communauté de la Première Nation Tlingit de Taku River, y compris les enfants de la communauté, ont souvent vécu des expériences qui ont renforcé leur lien avec le territoire. Les situations d'enseignement de la langue permises par un jeu comme *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres,* qui relie le territoire à la langue tlingit, ont une pertinence culturelle à la fois pour les enfants et pour les adultes. Le jeu, en tant qu'outil d'apprentissage reflétant des situations et des environnements réels, rend l'apprentissage d'autant plus amusant et intéressant pour l'apprenant et permet la création d'un climat d'apprentissage intergénérationnel, essentiel dans les contextes de langues en voie de disparition. Le jeu exploite des connaissances recueillies auprès d'aînés qui sont décédés depuis et par conséquent, assure la transmission et l'utilisation de ces connaissances. Comme l'ont si bien dit Dauenhauer et Dauenhauer au sujet de la langue tlingit en Alaska : « La conservation, c'est l'art de préserver les baies en en faisant de la confiture ou le saumon en le mettant dans des boîtes de conserve [...] Les livres et les enregistrements peuvent conserver les langues, mais seuls les gens et les communautés peuvent les maintenir

vivantes! » (cité dans Walsh, 2005 : 301). Le jeu de société *Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres* est un des moyens grâce auxquels la Première Nation Tinglit de Taku River tente de maintenir sa langue bien vivante[18].

[18] Article inédit en anglais, traduit par Chantal White.

References Cited

Amery, Rob (2001) Language Planning and Language Revival.*Current Issues in Language Planning*, 2, 2&3 : 141-221.

Associated Press (2006) "Scrabble to Save Sioux Tongue?", *Winnipeg Free Press,* March 26th, 2006.

Bauman, James (1980) *A Guide to Issues in Indian Language Retention.* Washington, D.C, Centre for Applied Linguistics.

British Columbia Yinka Dene Language Institute (2006) Consultation on Internet (http://www.ydli.org/bcother/bclstat.htm), March, 20, 2006.

Escobar, A. (2001) Culture Sits in Places: Reflections on Globalism and Subaltern Strategies on Localization. *Political Geography,* 20,139-74.

Fishman, Joshua (1991) *Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages.* Clevedon, UK, Multilingual Matters.

Fulford, George (1997) A Discussion Paper on the English Skills Development (ESD) Course for Grade 9 Students in Foggy Bay, Ontario. Unpublished manuscript. Winnipeg, MB, University of Winnipeg.

Goodfellow, Anne (2003) The Development of "New" Languages in Native American Communities. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 27, 2 : 41-59.

Hill, J. (2001) Dimensions of attrition in language death. In Maffi, L (ed). *On Biocultural Diversity: Linking Languages, Knowledge, and the Environment.* Washington, DC, Smithsonian Institute Press, pp. 175-189.

Hinton, L. (2003) Language Revitalization. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 23: 44-57.

Hinton, L. (2001) The Master-Apprentice Language Learning Program. In Hinton, L and Hale, K (eds.), *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice.,* San Diego, Academic Press, pp. 217-226.

Kinkade, M. Dale (1990) The Decline of Native Languages in Canada. In R.H. Robins and E. M Uhlenbeck (eds.), *Endangered Languages.* Oxford, Berg Publishers Limited, pp. 157-176.

Kraus, Michael (1998) The condition of Native North American languages: the need for realistic assessment and action. *International Journal of Sociology of Language* 132: 9-21.

Leavitt, Robert (1987) Fluency is not Enough: Reassessing the Goals of Native Language Instruction. In Cowan, W. (ed.), *Papers of the Eighteenth Algonquian Conference.* Ottawa, Carleton University Press, pp. 165-172.

Mattingley, C. (1992) *Tucker's Mob.* Norwood, SA, Omnibus Books.

Morrow, Phyllis (1987) *Making the Best of Two Worlds: An Anthropological Approach to the Development of Bilingual Education Materials in Southwestern Alaska.* Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Cornell University.

Norris, Mary Jane (1998) Canada's Aboriginal Languages. *Canadian Social Trends* Winter 1998: 8-16.

Nyman, Elizabeth and Jeff Leer (1993) *Gagiwdul.at: Brought Forth to Reconfirm: The Legacy of a Taku River Tlingit Clan.* Yukon Native Language Centre, Whitehorse and Alaska Native Language Center, Fairbanks.

Schreyer, Christine (2005) Unpublished fieldnotes, Atlin British Columbia, Taku River Tlingit First Nation.

Smith, Heather (2006) Playing to Learn: A Qualitative Analysis of Bilingual Pupil-Pupil Talk During Board Game Play. *Language and Education* 20(5): 415-437.

Taku River Tlingit First Nation (2003) *Ha Tlatgi – Ha Kustiyi*, Our Land – Our Way of Life. Lands and Resources Department. Atlin, British Columbia.

Thornton, Thomas (1997) Anthropological Studies of Native American Place Naming. *American Indian Quarterly*, Vol. 21, 2: 209-229.

Thornton, Thomas (2003) Place Names and the Language of Subsistence in Southeast Alaska. In *Maintaining the Links: Language, Identity, and the Land, Proceedings of the seventh conference presented by the Foundation for Endangered Languages.* (pp. 29--35) J. Blythe and R. McKenna Brown (eds). Bath, UK: The Foundation for Endangered Languages.

Walsh, Michael (2005) Will Indigenous languages Survive? *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34: 293-315.

Ward, John (2004) Internet consultation from (http://www.titleandrightsalliance.org/TlingitStatement_2004-11-18.htm), March, 2005).

Websites referenced:

Campus St. Jean website: http://www.csj.ualberta.ca/cerf/Description.htm

Carrier Scrabble article:
http://www.itre/cis/upenn.edu/~myl/langueglog/archives/002968.html

Dakotah Scrabble article:
http://itre.cis.upenn.edu/~myl/languagelog/archives/002965.html

Department of Indian Affairs: www.indian-affairs.org/languagepreservation.htm

"French Actif" news story: www.expressnews.ualberta.ca August 2, 2006

INAC community profiles December 2006:
http://sdiprod2.inac.gc.ca/FNProfiles/FNProfiles_GeneralInformation.asp?BAND_NUMBER=501&BAND_NAME=Taku+River+Tlingit

Chapter Three: "Nehiyawewin Askîhk" – Cree Language on the Land: Language Planning Through Consultation in the Loon River Cree First Nation[1]

Introduction

"Every land has its own language" (Manriquez, 2001: 544), and in fact some lands have more than one language, especially as the population of the world has increased, and Aboriginal peoples[2] have become minorities on their own lands. The Loon River Cree First Nation's home is located in north-central Alberta[3] - the heart of oil country in Canada. As prices of oil and gas have sky-rocketed in the politically charged world there has been increasing development in the oil and gas industry, and this development has had great impacts on the Aboriginal peoples that live in these areas of economic interest around the world. Canada has a long involved history with its Aboriginal peoples and often land is at the centre of the controversies. As a result, in recent years, courts have outlined Canada's "duty to consult" with Aboriginal peoples when there is an infringement on their Aboriginal rights and title to the land. However, there is no concrete definition of consultation, and this has caused confusion and inconsistent relationships with Aboriginal people. Consultation with Aboriginal peoples in resource rich areas is even more important because of the high likelihood that the profits from these natural resource endeavours will not be given to them. Within Canada, reserve lands are the property of the crown and usually any resource development that

[1] A version of this chapter has been published. Schreyer 2008. *Current Issues in Language Planning: Language Planning and Minority Languages*. 9(4):440-453.

[2] The term Aboriginal (as is the practice in Canada) is inclusive of native peoples of Canada, also known as First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. The term Indigenous, when it is used, will refer to those people who are original inhabitants of a particular land.

[3] Canada has ten provinces and three territories. The provinces have independent governments, however, the territories are run by the federal government. Through Canada's history as the federal government has turned over control of specific sectors (such as natural resources and education) to the provinces, the provinces have had more and more interaction with Aboriginal communities.

occurs on them will go to the federal government rather than the First Nations within whose traditional territory the land is located. The Loon River Cree First Nation, who have negotiated control over sub-surface rights to their lands, are becoming a well-known model for First Nations consultation in Alberta. This paper stems from my work with the Loon River Cree on issues pertaining to the impact their newly acquired recognition of control over their lands has had on their use of Cree in a daily context. The Loon River Cree First Nation settled their specific land claim in 1999. In order to more fully protect their Aboriginal and Treaty rights they have conducted a Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, which has merged into a Consultation Unit. The Consultation Unit is charged with dealing with the onslaught of industry not only within their reserve land, but also throughout their entire traditional territory.

The members of the Loon River Cree First Nation still actively use their language within their community and some elders are monolingual Cree speakers. However, as industry encroaches on them it is likely that more English will be spoken in the community. Many of the oil and gas companies' representatives are White-Canadians and come from the southern part of the province. They do not speak Cree and so their interactions with the community are inevitably conducted in English. I have spent numerous hours working in the Loon River Cree First Nation's band office and have seen both representatives of industry and the provincial government come to meetings in the community. In all of the cases I witnessed, the representatives did not speak Cree beyond the initial greeting "*Tânsî*" (How are you?). The

community, then, is faced with planning for the continued use of their language in light of this increasing use of English.

This research draws on my comparative study involving two First Nations' communities (the Loon River Cree) and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, located in Atlin, British Columbia. Each of these communities has been involved in land claims negotiations. However, the Loon River Cree First Nation has settled their specific land claim, and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation is still currently negotiating their comprehensive claim. My research examines the impact of land claims on language use within each community, and has shown that there are similarities that exist in their language planning strategies despite differences in rate of native language retention based on differences in social, economic, and political realities.[4] For the purposes of this paper, I will discuss the situation of language use amongst the members of the Loon River Cree First Nation specifically. When I began my research with the Loon River Cree I volunteered to work on a project of their choosing in exchange for being able to do my research with the community and I wrote a letter to the Loon River First Nation Chief and Council. Councilor Mayble Noskey, whose portfolio includes education, passed on my information to Richard Davis, the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study team manager. Richard and Mayble were interested in creating storybooks for the community Cree language classes based on the

[4] For more information on language planning amongst the Taku River Tlingit see: Schreyer, Christine (2006) Re-Orientations in Language Planning: A language-as-cultural-resource model". In R. Elaingainyan et al (eds), *Foundation for Endangered Languages Tenth Conference- Vital Voices: Endangered Languages and Multilingualism* (pp, 174-189). Central Institute for Indian Languages, Mysore, India and Foundation for Endangered Languages, York, England; Schreyer, Christine and L. Gordon. (2007) Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres: Un projet de revitalisation linguistique par le jeu. (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths: Fun and Games in Language Revitalization.) *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 31(1), 143-162.

information that had been collected from the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study. I began my research with the community at a critical juncture in the management of lands and resources in the community as the Consultation Unit had just been officially established and with it the goals of "language protection". The storybooks can be considered then as one of the Loon River Cree First Nation's first steps in implementing educational curriculum that links land use to language use.

This paper will describe national Canadian Aboriginal language policies and strategies for language protection, renewal, and maintenance. I will also discuss the theoretical language planning orientation of "language-as-resource" as defined by Ruiz (1984), and how the Loon River Cree First Nation is utilizing this model in terms of their own language planning. This paper will also explain the relationship between land and language amongst Aboriginal communities in general, and provide a background to the Loon River Cree First Nation. I will discuss the methodology of their Traditional Land Use Study, and the process that occurred to merge this study into a Consultation Unit. A brief summary of consultation in Canada will also be provided. And finally, I will describe how the Loon River Cree's Consultation Unit is dealing with the task of language planning and the role of status planning, acquisition planning, and corpus planning within their community.

Canadian National Aboriginal Language Strategies

In 1982, Michael Foster's survey on Canada's First Languages declared that only three of the 53 Aboriginal Languages in Canada were likely to survive if they did not receive critical attention from communities, educators, and linguists. These three languages were Ojibway, Cree, and

Inuktitut (Foster, 1982:7). Since 1982, there have been few concrete changes, and although these languages are still considered viable (Aboriginal Languages Task Force, 2005) they too are "losing ground". The calls to action have continued, however; and these have included the following:

> In 1998, the Assembly of First Nations declared a state of language emergency, calling on Canada to recognize and financially support First Nations' languages. In 2000, the Assembly of First Nations proposed a 'First Nation Language Policy for Canada' whereby Canada would recognize First Nation languages as Canada's original languages and help First Nations protect, promote, and use their languages, and deliver language programs and services under their own jurisdiction (Aboriginal Languages Task Force, 2005).

In December 2002, the Minister of Canadian Heritage announced a budget of $160 million over 10 years to build a centre to help "preserve, revitalize, and promote Aboriginal languages and cultures" (Aboriginal Language Task Force, 2005). A task force of 10 members from Métis[5], Inuit, and First Nations[6] communities worked together for a year to develop a national language strategy which they published in June of 2005[7].

In their article *Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night. Rage, Rage, against the Dying of the Light*, Blair and Fredeen discuss the impact that colonial governments have had on the Aboriginal Languages of Canada, and they elaborate on the numerous policies that have affected language loss. They argue:

> Canadian indigenous people have experienced over 400 years of domination. The Canadian government followed an assimilationist approach with indigenous people, and its policies and practices reflect

[5] The term Métis refers to those individuals of First Nation and European ancestry, usually Scottish or French.
[6] The term First Nation refers to those individuals who are status Indians. According to the terminology guidelines provided by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada status Indians are "Indians recognized under the Indian Act" a document created in 1876 that regulates the federal government's obligations to her Aboriginal population (http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/wf/trmrslt_e.asp?term=12).
[7] Unfortunately, lack of continued funding from the Federal government caused the task force to dissolve in 2006.

> this. The Indian Act in 1876, for example, authorized the federal government to direct all of the activities of Indian people. It stripped them of any power they may have had to control their lives…The act with its various amendments included, among other things, governance of the following: place of residence, access to travel, acquisition and sale of property or goods, education, and participation in traditional ceremonies. These components of this one act all contributed to language loss. (Blair and Freden, 1995: 35).

This is the legacy that the Aboriginal Languages Task Force has had to deal with and for them "the strategy must be a 100-year project to overcome the legacy of the many decades of neglect" (Aboriginal Languages Task Force, 2005:4). Elders working with the task force have called on First Nation, Inuit, and Métis people to do the following:

- Do not forget our languages
- Speak and write our languages
- Teach and learn our languages
- Respect each other's dialects and do not ridicule how others speak
- Focus on young people
- Start in the home to strengthen the will of the people to bring back our languages
- Work together to build a foundation for our people
- Speak with a united voice (Aboriginal Languages Task Force, 2005:3).

In total, after taking into account surveys conducted in First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities across Canada the Aboriginal Languages Task Force (2005) has developed twenty-five recommendations in order to create a Languages and Cultures Council. The very first of these recommendations was labeled - 1) The Link between Languages and the Land. Within this recommendation the task force stresses that when Aboriginal communities enter into agreements with federal, provincial, and territorial governments:

> The agreements or accords should recognize the importance of First Nation, Inuit, and Métis people of maintaining a close connection to the land in their traditional territories, particularly wilderness areas, heritage and spiritual or sacred sites, and should provide for their meaningful participation in stewardship, management, co-management,

> or co-jurisdiction arrangements. (Aboriginal Languages Task Force: 2005:9).

Although the connection between stewardship and management of natural resources to the protection of language may seem contradictory to Western worldviews this is exactly the ideology that Loon River Cree First Nation has modeled their language planning strategies on – a connection to the land. Within their worldview the land and its languages are intimately connected, and connection to the land amongst Aboriginal communities worldwide will be explored more thoroughly in the following section.

The Language and Land Interface

Early anthropological literature rarely addressed the concept of place as anything more than a location (Rodman, 1992). Although some anthropologists, such as Boas and his students, collected place names in their ethnographical inquiries it has only been in the last thirty years that an emphasis on studies of place and how "sense of place" or attachment to place (see Rodman, 1992: 643) have grown. Many scholars since then including Rosaldo (1980), Cruikshank (1990), and Basso (1996) have outlined the intricate relationship Aboriginal groups have with their land and how history can be seen to be recorded in the narratives and place names that describe the physical world. For example, Cruikshank writes that place names are "mnemonic pegs" in the oral histories of the Athapaskan women that she works with, and " 'getting the words right' became a metaphor for encoding the entire range of cultural knowledge that should be passed on with those [place] names" (Cruikshank, 1990: 58). More recent work on the importance of place names, and therefore language, can be seen in the work of Béatrice

Collignon. Collignon completed a survey of Inuit place names in four Canadian Arctic communities and through her work came to the conclusion that:

> place names are not essential for movement and survival. They are however, essential for making people feel at home in their surroundings, and for making these surroundings a human territory, where the culture may flourish (2006: 110).

The social connection that people, and particularly Aboriginal people, feel towards their lands manifests itself in language. It is for this reason that Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Studies, such as that conducted by the Loon River Cree (discussed in detail later in the paper), provide a platform for combining land use and language into a "sense of place". As will be seen, they can also provide a starting point for language planning that is connected to land use planning.

Another trend in studies connecting language and land has been the development of ecolinguistics. This is described by Mülhäusler (2001) as 1) seeing language as an integral part of a larger ecosystem or 2) the analysis of environmental discourse. He goes on to describe how, "languages … are repositories of past experience and once lost, a great deal of effort will be required to recover what has been lost with them" (2001: 143). Nettle and Romaine in their book *Vanishing Voices* also discuss the idea that once language is lost the knowledge associated with it is also lost. They write that "unfortunately, much of what is culturally distinctive in language – for example vocabulary for flora, fauna – is lost when language shift takes place" (Nettle and Romaine, 2000: 16). The connection here between land and language is apparent. Posey aptly summarizes when he says "the integral

(holistic) nature of [indigenous] knowledge systems has been shown to be linked to land and territory. Thus, it is impossible to discuss conservation of cultural and linguistic diversity without discussing the basic rights of local peoples and their self-determinations and control over their own lands and resources" (Posey, 2001: 395).

In 1991, in the midst of turmoil amongst Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people (including discussions on the role of Aboriginal peoples in the constitution, the armed conflict at Oka, Quebec, and media reports on the extreme poverty, illness, and suicide rates among Aboriginal communities) the government of Canada sought to answer some of the debate regarding the rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples was created in an attempt to answer the question, "what are the foundations of a fair and honourable relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people of Canada" (http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/rpt/wrd_e.html)? The commission provided feedback on a variety of issues such as Treaties, Health, Employment, and Self-governance amongst many others. Throughout the five compiled volumes *land* is seen to be a critical element to many of the categories up for debate. For example:

> Land is absolutely fundamental to Aboriginal identity … *land is reflected in the language, culture, and spiritual values of all Aboriginal peoples*. Aboriginal concepts of territory, property and tenure, of resource management and ecological knowledge may differ profoundly from those of other Canadians, but they are no less entitled to respect. (Canada, Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, vol. 2 Ottawa: Communication Group, 1996, emphasis added)

The importance of land to indigenous peoples can also be seen in Posey's descriptive compilation, from a wide range of international human rights organizations (mostly connected to the United Nations), of the rights that

national governments should grant to their indigenous peoples. These include: 1) the right to self-determination, 2) the right of ownership and control over *traditional lands and resources*, 3) the right to *development* on their own terms, 4) the right to collective, community empowerment, 5) the right to prior informed consent and privacy, 6) *the right to control access to traditional knowledge and privacy*, 7) the right to religious rights and freedom, and 8) the *right to a unique language* (Posey, 2001, emphasis added). It is exactly this desire for recognized control over land and resources that has led to the new-found need for the Loon River Cree First Nation to initiate language planning within their community, and it is the lands and resources sector of their community that is charged with this task. The community therefore is using a version of the "language-as-resource" language orientation that Ruiz outlined (1984). I will describe Ruiz's ideas and the differences between these and how the Loon River Cree First Nation is actually implementing this model in the following section.

"Language as Resource" and Language Planning

Orientations in language planning, as defined by Ruiz (1984) are, "a complex of dispositions toward…languages and their role in society. These dispositions may be largely unconscious…" (1984: 16). Ruiz goes on to state that although these orientations are unconscious it is possible to uncover them in language "policies and proposals which already exist" (1984: 16). Later in the same article, Ruiz outlines three types of language planning orientations: "language-as-problem", "language-as-right", and "language-as-resource". It is the last planning orientation that is of interest to this paper. Ruiz states that the

"language-as-resource" orientation may help resolve some of the conflicts that are present in the other two orientations:

> …it can help to ease tensions between majority and minority communities; it can serve as a more consistent way of viewing the role of non-English languages in U.S. society; and it highlights the importance of cooperative language planning. (1984:25-26).

Ruiz, in his descriptions of the ways that different communities can use the "language-as-resource" orientation approach, focuses on the capitalist underpinnings of American society. Within the United States, Ruiz writes that, "a fuller development of a resources-oriented approach to language planning could help reshape attitudes about language and language groups" (1984: 27), including a "more direct concern with resource *conservation* (1984: 26, emphasis in original). For Ruiz, this fuller approach includes "trans-national considerations" (1984: 27), such as in national security, diplomacy, and business/globalization, all of which have become even more important in the context of a post 9-11 United States.

In critiquing the "language-as-resource" model, Ricento (2005) has commented on the way in which the resource (the language) is being separated from its owners (the speakers) due to its economic value. He writes that:

> the resource to be 'cultivated, 'captured', 'enhanced' and 'increased', that is, languages important to U.S global military and economic interests, represents the values, goals and aspirations of dominant interests since those of 'groups' (e.g. ethnolinguistic minorities) have not been linked to national identity the way that those of the English–speaking majority have. (Ricento, 2005: 263)

The lack of recognition for the interests of the ethnolinguistic minority creates a schism between the language planning policy and the best interests of the community.

Petrovic defines language planning as "the process of determining the linguistic needs, wants, and desires *of a community* and seeking to establish polices to fulfill them" (Petrovic, 2005:397, emphasis added). However, the "language-as-resource" model as outlined by Ruiz is not taking the minority language community's needs, wants, and desires into consideration, but rather those of the majority and dominant speakers. Petrovic agrees that the model, as defined by Ruiz, "can only serve to perpetuate the inequitable linguistic *status quo* driven by capitalism in the first place....power remains with the dominant group" (Petrovic, 2005: 408). Therefore, although Ruiz's model originally described the "language-as-resource" model as benefiting the minority community the power is still held elsewhere. As Petrovic sees it, the "language-as-resource" model is "in large part, an economic defense of minority language maintenance" (397). This is not to say that the "language-as-resource" model can not be useful; however, it is only when the minority group uses this orientation to place value on their language will it be more successful. The Loon River Cree First Nation, along with other Aboriginal communities in Canada and around the world, sees a connection between their language and the resources which are found on their lands (as outlined in the previous section). In particular, the Aboriginal Languages Task Force has described the strong relationship Aboriginal languages have to the land from which they originated stating:

> 'The land' is more than the physical landscape; it involves the creatures and plants, as well as the people's historical and spiritual relationship to their territories. First Nation, Inuit, and Métis languages show that the people are not separate from the land. They have a responsibility to protect it and to preserve the sacred and traditional knowledge associated with it" (Aboriginal Languages Task Force, 2005: ii).

For them their language is just one of many resources that have sustained them and their cultures for millennia. Ricento explains how the orientation of "language-as-resource" needs to be part of the minority community's language orientation in order for it to thrive. He states:

> If languages function in particular ways in particular communities, they *are* in fact resources and are recognized as such by those communities. They should not be viewed as resources by academics and language planners *only* when convenient to serve particular disciplinary or state interests, and otherwise ignored or suppressed, whether explicitly or covertly. (Ricento: 2005: 364, emphasis in original).

The Loon River Cree First Nation's use of language planning that is tied to land and resource planning is one example where the "language-as-resource" model has been adopted by the community. Fishman, in his 2006 book on the relationship between corpus planning and status planning writes that:

> [l]anguage planning is always done in accord with the more general culture of planning (agricultural planning, industrial planning, educational planning, etc.) insofar as the need for consensus building and the use of sanctions (negative or positive) are concerned. (Fishman, 2006: 5)

Within the Loon River Cree First Nation, language planning has been done in accord with land planning, and land planning within the community has developed from a desire to be the continued stewards over the resources that are a part of that land, including language.

Loon River Cree First Nation

Previously known as one of the "isolated communities" of northern Alberta the Loon River Cree First Nation's traditional territory is located

within the Treaty 8 area of Alberta[8] at Loon Lake, Alberta approximately 175 kilometres north of Lesser Slave Lake in north-central Alberta. Treaty 8 was originally signed in 1899; however, members of the Loon River Cree did not sign the Treaty, and were not recognized as a band[9] until 1991 (see "In the Matter of the Constitution of the Loon River Cree Band in the Province of Alberta", Ministerial Order, December 4th, 1991). The most commonly referenced reason behind the Loon River Cree First Nation's members absence from the signing of Treaty 8 is that the Treaty commissioners traveled by major rivers, and the Loon River Cree were missed because they lived "in the bush" between the rivers (J. Noskey, 2007). The Loon River Cree First Nation did not receive reserve lands until the community signed an addendum to Treaty 8 in 1999. An addendum means that the Loon River Cree are a part of Treaty 8, only belatedly, and they are no different from the other communities that signed in 1899. With the addendum, the community received a total of 44,800 acres of reserve lands split into three reserves and $2 million in compensation. The fact that Loon River Cree First Nation was previously known as "isolated" is particularly ironic due to the fact that it is their current

---

[8]From 1871 to 1939, the government of Canada signed eleven treaties, known as "the numbered treaties", with Aboriginal groups across Canada. For more information on these treaties see: Morris, Alexander (1991). *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories*. Fifth House Publishers and Coates, Ken (ed). (1992) *Aboriginal Land Claims in Canada: A Regional Perspective*. Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, Ltd. For information on Treaty 8 specifically see: Fumoleau, René. (2004) *As long as this land shall last: a history of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11, 1870-1939*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press; Crerar, Duff and Jaroslav Petryshn (eds.). (2000) *Treaty 8 Revisited: Selected Papers on the 1999 Centennial Conference*, Grande Prairie: Lobstick Press.

[9] According to the terminology guideline provided by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada a band is "a body of Indians for whose collective use and benefit lands have been set apart or money is held by the Crown, or declared to be a band for the purposes of the *Indian Act*. Each band has its own governing band council, usually consisting of one chief and several councilors" (http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/wf/trmrslt_e.asp?term=6). Today many bands prefer to be referred to as First Nations.

loss of isolation that has led to the recent development of language planning within the community.

In terms of language maintenance, prior to the recognition of the community members as status Indians, they were often believed to be Métis. For example, in *The Métis and the Land in Alberta: Land Claims Research Project 1979-1980*, published by the Métis Association of Alberta the community profile for Loon Lake states, "Loon Lake is a predominantly Métis community ... as in the other communities we visited, trapping and hunting are actively pursued" (Sawchuk and Grey, 1980: 290). As well, in 1970 the population statistics at Loon Lake listed 121 of the 150 people recorded as Métis (Mansell, 1970). This classification of the community of Loon Lake as Métis has had many positive impacts on language use within the community. As a result of being declared Métis, very few elders were ever sent to Residential School, and those that were sent only attended for a short period of time (an average of five years). Therefore, although language shift has occurred in other Cree communities such as the community of the Fisher River Cree in Manitoba the conditions of language loss described by Sachdev (1998) do not apply to the Loon River Cree. In describing the community of Fisher River he writes that there are:

> only a small group of fluent speakers of Cree (mainly elders), and Cree is taught (only as a subject) at the school in the community...Dominated by English, the overall vitality of Cree in Fisher River is low given the previous history of oppressive residential schooling and devaluing of Aboriginal languages that resulted in more than an entire generation being deprived of learning and speaking in-group languages [such as Cree]. (Sachdev, 1998:110).

In contrast, many elders at Loon Lake are still monolingual Cree speakers, and of the few that can speak English only those who attended Residential school

can read or write English. This was evident to me in my capacity as a researcher in the community as conversations with elders were usually translated by their children or grandchildren. The Métis land claims research report of 1980 also recorded language use within Loon Lake stating: "The Métis and Non-Status Indians in the isolated communities today have maintained strong ties with their Cree ancestry. Cree is still the most commonly used, everyday language and Indian identity is important" (Sawchuk and Grey, 1980: 276). Another statistical analysis of the populations of the isolated communities records that in 1971, "…160 people or 65% speak a Native language…" (Fraser and Corstan, 1976).

Another reason for the continued use of Cree within the community was the arrival of the Alliance Church Missionary, Clarence Jaycox, in 1955 (McGarvey, 1956). Jaycox's arrival in the community initiated a period of decreased mobility as families settled in the Loon Lake area in order that their children could attend the school that Jaycox was building there. Although religion has often been a source of language shift within Aboriginal communities across Canada, the Alliance faith encouraged community members to become pastors. The pastors often learnt English, as part of their training, but many of their sermons were conducted in Cree. Westman, in his research on Pentecostal religion among the neighbouring Cree communities of Trout and Peerless Lake, has written:

> The status of Cree as the main religious language of Trout Lake's Pentecostal and Catholic congregations is an important feature of the language's vitality in the region (*cf.* Fishman 2006). As a church language, Cree is spoken and attended to in public, learned by outsiders (*i.e.,* missionaries and researchers) and has a broad written corpus. Since many key elders are unilingual Cree speakers and several adults are literate in Cree, services are mainly in that language. This

> reinforces existing community speech norms favouring the use of Cree among adults in most settings (Westman, 2008)

The same can be said for the use of Cree amongst the Loon Lake congregations as well. In fact, references in the Alliance Witness newsletter (describing missions in Loon River territory) provide indirect information on the use of Cree and the missionaries' need for translators even in 1971 and 1977 (Foster, 1971; and Ekback, 1977). Religious services in the community are still conducted in a mixture of Cree and English (with an emphasis on Cree) as I witnessed at the Bible Camp held in September 2007 at *Maskwa Kapimskohtît* (Bear Walk Lake). Cree language use at Loon Lake has continued despite the fact that the Cree language is losing ground in communities across Canada for a variety of reasons. The isolation of the Loon River Cree First Nation community, their classification as Métis until fairly recently (1991), the lack of community members who attended Residential Schools, the strong religious presence including the construction of a local community school[10] have all aided in the creation of stable bilingualism (see Crystal, 2000) in the community. The Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study further outlines the Loon River Cree First Nation's social history, and the various forces that have impacted language use within their territory, and it will be discussed in the following section.

Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study

Between July 1st, 2004 and October 7th, 2005 the LRCFN conducted a Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, under the direction of Richard Davis, a Cree consultant who is also from the Treaty 8 area, and Barry

[10] The current school in Loon Lake is named after Clarence Jaycox.

Hochstein, a consultant who had worked on many Traditional Land Use Studies across Alberta (see Fort McKay First Nation, 1994; Bigstone Cree Nation & Métis People of Kituskeenow, 1999). A Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study involves interviewing elders and other community members, often using maps, in order to understand the history of the community, their patterns of land use and locations of heritage sites including: berry patches, hunting areas, trapping grounds, trails, burial grounds, and many more. For Richard Davis, it is important to conduct Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Studies because:

> For thousands of years First Nation people traveled this land. Our history is written in every river, lake and living part of creation. This knowledge is at risk of remaining silent, never to go beyond our memories of our elders if we do not document it now (Davis, 2003: 2).

Posey, in discussing the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity, writes that, "what is 'traditional' about traditional knowledge is not its antiquity, but *the way it is acquired and used.* In other words, the social process of learning and sharing knowledge, which is unique to each Indigenous culture, lies at the very heart of its 'traditionality'" (Posey, 2003: 381). In the Loon River Cree's Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, the community had complete control over all aspects of the study, and conducted it themselves, which allowed for the traditional process of sharing knowledge between community members to occur.

The team (Eva Whitehead, Laverne Letendre, and Kenny Ward) conducted interviews with twenty elders and knowledge holders described as people who continue to use the land in a traditional manner (Davis, pers. comm.). The interviews were conducted individually, as well as in groups including: trappers, only women, only men, and couples. All of the interviews

were done in Cree, as many of the elders are monolingual Cree speakers, and all of the interviewers are fluent in the Cree language. Other traditional land use and occupancy studies have been completed in Alberta, but the Loon River Cree were the first to, "conduct interviews with a live Geographical Information Systems program on a Liquid Crystal Display projector, eliminating the need for hard copy maps and 'sticky' icons. This replaced the labour-intensive mapping methodology of earlier years, and started a revolution in digital data acquisition" (LRCFN, Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study pamphlet, 2005). The Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study team were also trained in interviewing skills (including ethics, multi-media equipment training), general computer use, and transcription skills. Site visits were also conducted as part of the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, and these were to places mentioned in the interviews that have historic significance to community members of the Loon River Cree, such as cabin sites, burial locations, medicine patches, berry patches, and many more.

From a First Nations' perspective, "conducting a traditional land use and occupancy study is more than merely recording the history of our people; the information needs to be able to be used to promote economic development and assist in the self-sufficiency of the Nations" (Davis, 2003: 2). One of the main components to self-sufficiency is the ability of the First Nation to interact with industry, particularly the resource industry, and this is where consultation (with the federal and provincial governments, as well as industry) comes into play, and as a result the Loon River Cree First Nation's Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study team has transitioned into a Consultation Unit. The next section will briefly discuss the role of consultation in Canada, its

application and definitions, before moving on to a discussion of the Loon River Cree First Nation's Consultation Unit specifically.

Loon River's Consultation Unit

Isaac and Knox (2003) write that "since its first appearance, the Crown's duty to consult has inspired considerable confusion and conflicting views in the academic literature on its definition and implications" (2003:50)[11]. Although the definitions of consultation remain debatable, the procedures regarding what the Crown's duty is have developed through judicial legislation[12]; the most important decision being that of *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*[13]. As Lawrence and Macklem have argued, "lower courts have been left with the unenviable task of determining many of the practicalities of the duty to consult, including questions relating to the *who, when, and how* of consultation" (2000: 258, emphasis in original). For First Nations, the *what* of consultation has been increasingly defined through their Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Studies. Richard Davis, has stated that "traditional land use and occupancy studies' answer the question 'consult about what?', and provide certainty of land tenure in situations of potential infringement on Aboriginal Rights" (Davis, 2007). Industry has also become an important player alongside the provincial and federal governments in the Loon River Cree territory and consultation applies to the companies wishing to conduct natural resource extraction in Loon River Cree territory as well.

---

[11] The duty to consult was first outlined in [1990] S.C.R. 1075 *R. v Sparrow*
[12] There are many articles that summarize this process, including: Lawrence and Macklem (2002), Isaac and Knox (2003), and Szatylo (2002).
[13] *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia,* [1997] 3 S.C.R. 1113.

One of the first mandates of the Loon River Cree First Nation's Consultation Unit was to create a policy outlining their role in consultation with government and industry. Their document of policies and procedures outlines their responsibilities as including:

- Protect[ing] LRFN [Loon River First Nation] members' Treaty and Aboriginal rights
- Protect[ing] the environment on reserve and within LRFN traditional use area
- Protect[ing] the *culture, language* and lifestyle of the LRFN community and membership (LRCFN Consultation Unit, Policies and Procedures, 2006, emphasis added).

As well, their goals also include "assist[ing] LRFN member trappers with *awareness and understanding* of resource development activities affecting their registered fur management area" (LRCFN Consultation Unit, Policies and Procedures, 2006, emphasis added). This is particularly important as many of the Loon River Cree First Nation elders are monolingual Cree speakers, and often need the assistance of the Consultation Unit to help them not only understand what development may be occurring on their traplines, but also as translators for the parties involved to a certain degree. With new industry becoming involved with the community comes new vocabulary especially in regard to the technical and technological aspects of resource extraction. During my time in the community, I was fortunate to be able to go out on a site visit with three members of the Traditional Land Use Study team and three elders to help locate the remains of a cabin site that had previously been described in the Traditional Land Use Study. As we drove off-road trails in back country areas and began to encounter oil well sites it became evident to me that there is an entirely separate language register of oil and gas

vocabulary[14] that the members of the Consultation Unit know and need to interpret for other members of their community (Schreyer, field notes 2007). This could eventually prove problematic for speakers of the Cree language.

Since the Consultation Unit's members are for the most part the same community members who were involved in the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy study, they are also able to provide information on specific topics related to land use (terms for flora and fauna) in the Cree language, which other community members who do not use these words on a daily basis may not know.[15] For example, one day while I was working in the Consultation Unit office community members who were not a part of the Traditional Land Use study came in. I was editing a list of berry names and a discussion ensued as to the names of particular berries. The non-team member was able to describe a particular berry's ability to make a person's skin itch, but only the Traditional Land Use Study team members were able to name the berry as *kawastowîmna* (itchy beard berry, known in English as a bunchberry) (Schreyer, field notes, 2007). An interesting study by Berkes and Mackenzie (1978), looked at "Cree Fish Names from Eastern James Bay, Quebec" in order to compare Western names with the Cree names, and the ability for the two sets of names to be matched. According to them, "a systematic study [was] important in part because fish species of the area have elevated levels of mercury" (1978: 489), and it was important to record the Cree names in order that signs can be posted to warn the fishermen of potential dangers. However, in some cases there was no Cree equivalent for the Latin or English name and

[14] These include the words: battery, play, 2-D, and seismic.
[15] In my work with the LRCFN, it became evident that knowledge of specific terms for flora and fauna were no longer in popular use. During the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, team members were often required to consult with their elders in order to learn the Cree words for a particular species of plant, fish, or animal.

vice versa. Similar cases might also be problematic for the Loon River Cree First Nation's Consultation Unit, as they deal with the resource industry. The language element of the Consultation Unit, both as interpreters for Cree land users as well as protectors of the culture and language, leave the Loon River Cree First Nation's Consultation Unit in an interesting position in terms of language planning within the community which is unique to the way in which they are conducting consultation within their community.

Language Planning through Consultation

Within the Loon River Cree First Nation's language planning, status planning, acquisition planning, and corpus planning need to be addressed. As Rob Amery has written:

> A fundamental dichotomy in language planning measures is that of status planning vs. corpus planning. The former concerns measures that affect or determine the position held by the language while corpus-planning measures are those which affect and shape the language itself as a linguistic system. In the context of language revival, status planning might include gaining official status or a measure of official status through the reinstatement of place names, etc., while corpus planning includes the establishment of norms of pronunciation and grammar, establishing a spelling system, elaboration of the lexicon, etc. While status planning and corpus planning might be conceptualised as quite distinct processes, such measures always work hand in hand (Amery, 2001: 153).

Cooper has also differentiated acquisition planning from status planning when he explains that "status planning is an effort to regulate the demand for verbal resources whereas acquisition planning is an effort to regulate the distribution of those resources" (Cooper, 1989:120). Taylor has written that "it is in acquisition planning that the education sector can take the most active role in policy implementation" (Taylor, 2002: 316). Currently, the mandate of the Consultation Unit has played itself out in educational projects that address the

use of Cree language in the school, and the language planning that is currently in the community may be best described as "micro language planning" (see Liddicoat and Baldauf, 2008).

In terms of status planning, it is unlikely that Cree will acquire official language status across Canada[16], or within the province of Alberta for that matter, therefore raising the level of consciousness regarding its use in the community is one way that status planning can occur. In discussing the frequency of Cree language use amongst community members Arthur Noskey (Loon River Cree Chief) told me his opinions on the position of the language in the community:

> I think that as far as the language being used in the community you don't hear it as much as you used to. I think we're slowly losing it, and in a way, it has its pros and cons to it. For me, as an monolingual Cree speaker, when I was going to school as a five year old I had to learn the English language before I could start understanding the work. So, it was a struggle, and it probably put us back about a year and a half in the educational process having to learn the English language first. So now I think a lot of the parents, and more the younger generation, the first language now is English. They speak more English now than they do Cree. The kids are growing up now anywhere from say 12 and under, maybe 14 and under, and some of them can understand but don't speak it, and some of them don't understand anything at all. So, I think it's an area, where there's a lack of elder involvement maybe, but it's just basically the lack of practicing the language is how we're losing it (Noskey, 2007).

In order to increase knowledge of Cree language for those children whose parents are not fluent in Cree, as well as to develop formal knowledge of Cree structure, language classes have begun at the school. However, most of the language curriculum that is used in the school is in southern Plains Cree dialect and do not reflect what is spoken in Loon River homes. As Jerry Noskey, another former Loon River Cree First Nation councilor, says "the

[16] Cree does hold official Aboriginal status in some parts of Canada including the North West Territories, and has also acquired more status via the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

elders don't like it, and think that it should be taught at home, especially because the dialect that is taught in schools is different" (2007).

During my research with the community, I was able to sit in on some of the Cree language classes at the community school. There were marked differences in the amount of language that was being taught and used in class between the kindergarten class, the grade two class, and the grade six class. The kindergarteners focused on numbers and colours in Cree and involved colouring sheets and counting activities. English was mainly used to provide instructions (Schreyer, field notes, 2006). However, in the grade two class most of the in-class instructions were provided in Cree. The teacher asked questions in Cree related to a story that she had read at the beginning of the class. The story was about a fictional cartoon character called *peariskwesis* (pear-girl) and her adventures at school. This story was completely unrealistic and not relevant to the students' lives (Schreyer, field notes, 2006). This is one of the reasons why the Chief and Council, the Consultation Unit, and the language teachers have deemed it so important to develop storybooks that are based on land use activities and the cultural history of the Loon River Cree in order to provide culturally relevant learning materials to the students. Finally, the grade six class also focused on answering questions related to a story and instructions were provided in Cree. However, the students in this class were heard to be addressing questions to each other in Cree outside the context of the lesson suggesting that they are using the language in other domains outside of the classroom (Schreyer, field notes, 2006)[17].

[17] In particular, I heard three students discussing a bear that had been seen near the community.

Chief Arthur Noskey also discussed the imperfections that the classroom can have for the Cree classes. He says:

> We've introduced Cree at the school for those that want to take it up, but I'm not sure of its effect. I think the education part of it would be being challenged to use it on a daily basis in your conversations. I think that would be the benefit of the language. Then there are some of the words in Cree that have meaning, and they mean so much that we can't find the English word for it. It has to be about three or four words put together to make sense of what that Cree word is. In a way, some of us even myself I speak Cree a lot, but even for me there are some words that I don't know the old words. Our elders are always educated and so they might use a word that'll prompt you to ask "well, what does it mean?" So, in a way there is an ongoing education at the end but you know some of the kids right now will just shake their heads and say "I don't understand". They're not maybe inquisitive to try and know.

The information from the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study was meant to be "living knowledge" located in a community database, and one way in which it can continue to live is by using the information that was collected to teach the younger generation about the lives of their elders, and, at the same time, increase the status of the language within the community. Richard Davis, in describing the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, has said that "it has multiple uses, and it could be used in school curriculum in order to teach students about their history and culture" (Davis, 2007). Kenny Ward, a Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study team member, told me about some of his ideas for the information collected:

> I think probably the younger generation [it] would be good to educate them on those things. For example, school kids, telling them this is where your grandfather used to live, and [show them] little maps and even icons and stuff like that, and I think they would learn. They'll remember that and they'll speak Cree as well I think. I think they have Cree classes here as well. They have the southern Cree (Ward, 2007).

Currently, the language curriculum being used in the school is produced outside the community and often it is created in Southern Albertan Plains Cree

dialect (which requires the teacher to adjust it to the Loon River Cree)[18] and is about places, events, and activities that are not a part of life at Loon River. Westman has written his opinions of the differences of Cree used within the wider geographical area. He states:

> Even between northern Alberta communities, differences in speech practice exist. As I moved the focus of my research from Cadotte Lake east to Trout Lake/Peerless Lake in 2005, it became clear that many people felt the two districts (sharing kin groups and located less than 200 km apart) had a distinct style and speed of speech, which could be recognized and pinpointed by fluent speakers familiar with the district. Moreover, the community of Loon River, in between these areas, was recognized as having yet a third, intermediate, "way of speaking" (Hymes 1974). People in these communities also have a different slang register in Cree than those from other communities, further away, such as Gift Lake. (Westman, 2008)

The curriculum from the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, such as the storybooks, would include the Loon River "way of speaking" as well as real pictures of life in the Loon River Cree territory (such as from Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study site visits and from personal or archival collections) and would be more relevant to the children of Loon River, and therefore, would help improve their interest in the language classes as it is based on their "*kôkams*' (grandmothers') and *môsams'* (grandfathers')" lives.

Recently discussions of language education in Alaska have stated that it should be "place-based". This phrase, discussed by Thomas Thornton, an anthropologist who has worked with Tlingit speakers in Sitka, can be further described below:

---

[18] The Cree language is split into five distinct dialects, which are regionally specific, and are labeled based on geographic and natural features of the areas in which they are found. These include: Plains Cree dialect ("y"), Swampy Cree dialect ("n"), Moose Cree dialect ("l"), Wood Cree dialect ("th"), and Atihkamek Cree dialect ("r"). The letters represent the dominant sound difference in the dialects, and academics would generally Loon River Cree would be grouped under the Wood Cree dialect. However, the community themselves only differentiate between "northern" (to which grouping they belong) and "southern" or "plains" Cree (which is found south of Lesser Slave Lake).

> Place-based language education starts with the realization that indigenous peoples' most fundamental resources are traditional lands and resources from which they have derived nourishment, instruction, and inspiration for centuries, if not millennia. It recognizes that Native languages are born of intimate interaction with particular landscapes over time and that these interactions are commemorated and encapsulated in place names, place narratives, and other genres of place (Thornton, 2003: 34).

A similar motivation to connect land to language in "placed-based" language education was the reasoning behind compiling information for the story books from quotes that were part of the elders' interviews. One particularly poignant quote was "*Na mokatch nikaponi âchimon*" (I will never quit telling stories), and this has become the name of the set of eight storybooks.

During my stay at Loon Lake in October of 2006, community members were tanning moose hides in order that the younger generation could learn the technique from their elders. One of the books was about moose hunting entitled "*Ka kiyakîkway nikîkakwemicinân oma môswa kanipahith*" (We used to use everything that we can get out of the moose for food). And this was a perfect opportunity to take photos for inclusion in the book. The stories, therefore, are based on activities that happened out on the land and in the community and include pictures of the actual places, people, and activities. The text of the stories is actual quotes from the Elders' interviews. The stories can be further developed in the classroom using the vocabulary that is developed in other activities. These could include such topics as: what life was like in the past, hunting today, or favorite types of berries.

Place names are another important resource for learning language and developing knowledge of place and culture, but also for enhancing status of the Cree language within the community. Currently, members of the

community use the Cree names for some of the places in their community.[19] In some cases, signs are posted with Cree names and this obvious use of Cree place names in the community is a great start for building the status of the language.

There are over 100 Cree place names that have been recorded as part of the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, and these could also be incorporated into daily and "official" community use in order to increase community awareness of the relationship of the Cree language to the Loon River Cree First Nation's traditional land use. Some of these place names tell of food resources – plants and animals, descriptions of the environment, and activities that occur in certain places. As well, there are some that are connected to stories about specific people. A large scale map of the Loon River Cree First Nation Traditional Territory is in the process of being developed which will include all of the Cree names. It will be posted in the Cree language class as well as the Consultation Unit office and is designed to help the children connect the places to their own knowledge of where they have traveled and the places they have seen. Intergenerational learning has also been known to provide greater language learning (Fishman, 2000), and plans are to include the elders in class to help learn the place names and to tell the stories associated with the places. Numerous place names have also been included in the storybook entitled "*Kâyas mâna sâgahigansa peyakwan meskanawa ikî itapatakow shônek sîpek*" (Long ago the little lakes were used just like roads along the river banks). Within this book the place names are

[19] For example, while I was in the community in late August of 2007, I saw signs posted for a Bible Camp at Bear Walk. This is an English translation of the Cree name for this place, and it is frequently used in conversation. I also saw other signs posted advertising events such as quad rallies that used the Cree name, its English translation, and then what the "official" name of the place is in English in that order.

listed in succession as elders describe the trails and paths they took during their seasonal routines, and in order for the students to fully understand where these travels occurred they will have to know the names of the places and where they are located within their traditional territory. The map that was mentioned earlier could be used to help illustrate the trails and the wide-ranging travel that the Loon River people accomplished in the past as well as the places people continue to travel to today.

In terms of corpus planning, the focus for the Consultation Unit's protection of their language is through the development of a standardized writing system for the community. As many members of the community are fluent speakers there is no need to develop standardized pronunciations, grammar, or vocabulary as there would be in an endangered language community[20]. In an endangered language community consensus often needs to be reached as to the standard pronunciation of the word which is no longer in daily use in order to re-introduce it into the speech community's vocabulary. However, in Loon Lake, there is a need to develop a standardized writing system for the community as very few people write Cree on a daily basis, and even fewer have knowledge of standard academic spelling conventions[21]. Writing in Cree is particularly important to the community, if the language is going to continue as the primary language within the Loon River Cree First

---

[20] Tlingit language is considered endangered, and in the Taku River Tlingit situation, decisions needed to be made on almost all aspects of language. In fact, during my work with the community the orthography in use was switched from Inland Tlingit to Coastal Tlingit. For more information on this see: Schreyer, Christine and L. Gordon. (2007) Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres : Un projet de revitalisation linguistique par le jeu. (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths: Fun and Games in Language Revitalization.) *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 31(1), 143-162.

[21] The two types of Cree writing systems used are known as Roman Orthography and Syllabics. There are differences in spelling standards across the dialects, and even within regions there can be local variations.

Nation. It will be necessary to be able to write in both Cree and English during interactions between the community, the Chief and Council, and outsiders such as government and industry rather than constantly switching to English writing. As well, during the construction of the storybooks it was stressed by parents that the Cree writing should take into account standard English use of punctuation such as quotation marks and question marks in order that their children could master the punctuation of the English language while at the same time learn the writing system and literacy of their own language (Schreyer, field notes, 2007).

The first document that the Loon River Cree First Nation will be partially publishing in Cree, in their own particular dialect, is the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Atlas, *Eskopîhk ekwa Anohch, Then and Now: The Loon River Cree First Nation Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study.* During the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study team members used English spelling conventions to phonetically represent the Cree words[22]. Some elders in the community were taught the Cree Syllabic[23] writing system, however, many of the middle and younger generation do not know how to read this style of writing. Kenny Ward in his interview discussed the use of syllabics within the community. He said:

> I know if it's in syllabics, there are a few people that read syllabics, like those people that read Bibles. The residential school people most of them that's where they got some of their education, I think. But there are a few people that read Cree syllabics like that ..: [they] read off the bible, and can carry a conversation like that. It's pretty neat actually" (Ward, 2007).

---

[22] For example, the word for raspberry is *ayôskan,* and it was written by Traditional Land Use and Occupancy study team members as *ayouskan.*

[23] The Cree syllabic writing system, believed by some to have been created by the Anglican Minister Rev. James Evans to aid in biblical translation, uses geometric shapes to represent vowels and consonant-vowel pairs in the Cree language.

In developing the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Atlas it was important to the community that the writing system was accessible to as many members as possible, and that it reflected how they actually say the words. I was told that if it is written the way the southern Plains Cree dialect is written (with voiceless stops and affricates) the elders would wonder where the speaker had learnt their Cree[24]. Working together, the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study members and I[25], have created a standard writing system for the Loon River Cree First Nation using the vowel system of the academic standard[26] but incorporating the sounds of their community. This is extremely relevant in terms of language planning, and in particular corpus planning, as this book will be the beginning step in setting a standard for all written Cree language within the community. The community members acknowledge the fact that their children will need to learn how to read and write in Cree in order to keep the language fluent within their community. The storybooks that incorporate the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study information will be written entirely in Cree using Roman Orthography, and in the dialect that is representative of the Loon River way of speaking. They will also include academic conventions of punctuation, and an English translation will appear only at the end of the book. More projects involving language use can, and undoubtedly will, be developed in order to fulfill the Consultations

[24]For example, the word for lake would be written "*Sâkahikan*" in Plains Cree and "*Sâgahigan*" in Loon River Cree's dialect.
[25] I was able to help develop a standard orthography with community members due to my training in linguistics and my experience in learning the Cree language in university classes, including classes taken at the University of Winnipeg and the University of Alberta.
[26] The academic spelling conventions of Cree have been established by the use and productions of texts by the University of Alberta, the University of Saskatoon, and the University of Manitoba.

Unit's mandate to protect their culture and language, and these will develop over time as consultation within the community changes.

Conclusion

For many years the isolation of the Loon River Cree First Nation helped to contribute to a healthy language environment and protected the language from the pressures that many other Aboriginal language groups in Canada faced. However, with the change from isolation to industrialization language shift has slowly begun in the community. Crystal has written "when one culture assimilates to another, the sequence of events affecting the endangered language seem to be the same everywhere" (2000: 78). Although the Cree language is not considered endangered across Canada or in Loon River Cree community, the processes of language assimilation have begun to occur. These processes have been quite different than many other Aboriginal communities across Canada (as described above), but at the same time the encroaching industrialization has had many impacts on the language used in Loon River Cree First Nation territory. The environment in the Loon Lake area has also been affected, as well as the livelihoods of the community members of the Loon River Cree who relied on trapping, hunting, and fishing to sustain them for many generations. In order to protect their land and way of life they have compiled information through their Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study that has provided them, as well as the government of Canada, the government of Alberta, and industry certainty on what their rights to the land are. The community now requires consultation with all industry and government developments within their territory, and, for the most part, industry and government are complying with their requests. A serendipitous

outcome of the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study and the consultation process has been the formal development of the Consultation Unit, whose job is not only the protection of the land, but also the culture and language of the Loon River Cree First Nation.

Crystal lists three broad stages of language shift (2000) and these include immense pressure from political, economic, and social forces in the dominant language, a period of emergent bilingualism, followed by an increased use of the dominant language in more and more domains until it is the only language used. Currently, the Loon River Cree First Nation is in a period of relatively stable bilingualism, the second of Crystal's stages, although this could change depending on the economic development that occurs on their land and the Consultation Unit's ability to protect the Cree language as well as Loon River Cree land. Crystal declares that "it is the second stage - the stage of emergent bilingualism- where there is a real chance to make progress. If the process of language shift is to be slowed down, stopped or reversed this…is where the attention must be focused" (Crystal, 2000: 79).

The Consultation Unit's plans, so far, have revolved around the information obtained from the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, which, to reiterate, has shown how intimately language and landscape are connected in Aboriginal worldview. This has involved raising the status of the language through the use of place names, and in the school curriculum through the storybooks based on the oral histories of the elders' in the community. The creation of a standardized orthography has also been developed, and overall this has contributed to the community sustaining interest in their

language. Chief Arthur Noskey is optimistic with his comment "I don't think we'll ever get to a place where we'll just totally lose it. I think maybe it will be some years, but it will pick up" (Noskey, 2007). Picking up the language, or using it daily with the elders and developing literacy skills, are all aspects of language maintenance that the Consultation Unit has helped set in motion in order that their language will continue to flourish and endure (Bauman, 1980) within their community.

References Cited

Aboriginal Language Task Force Report (2005) *Towards a New Beginning: A Foundational Report for a Strategy to Revitalize First Nations, Inuit and Métis Languages and Cultures.* Report to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, June 2005.

Amery, A. (2001) Language planning and language revival. *Current Issues Language Planning* 2 (2, 3), 141-221.

Basso, Keith H. (1996) *Wisdom Sits in Places: landscape and language among the Western Apache.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Bauman, James (1980) *A Guide to Issues in Indian Language Retention.* Washington, D.C: Centre for Applied Linguistics.

Berkes, Fikret and Mackenzie, Marguerite. (1978) Cree Fish Names from Eastern James Bay, Quebec. *Arctic* 31(4), 489-495.

Bigstone Cree Nation and Métis People of Kituskeenow (1999) *Kituskeenow cultural land-use and occupancy study*. Calgary: Arctic Institute of North America.

Blair, Heather and Shirley Fredeen (1995) Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night. Rage, Rage, against the Dying of the Light. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 26(2):27-49.

Coates, Ken (ed.) (1992) *Aboriginal Land Claims in Canada: A Regional Perspective.* Copp Clark Pitman, Ltd: Toronto.

Collignon, Béatrice (2006) *Knowing Places: The Inuinnait, Landscapes, and the Environment.* Edmonton: Canadian Circumpolar Institute Press.

Cooper, Robert L. (1989) *Language Planning and Social Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crerar, Duff and Jaroslav Petryshn (eds.) (2000) *Treaty 8 Revisited: Selected Papers on the 1999 Centennial Conference*. Grande Prairie: Lobstick Press.

Cruikshank, Julie (1981) Legend and Landscape: Convergence of Oral and Scientific Traditions in the Yukon Territory. *Arctic Anthropology* XVIII (2), 67-91.

Cruikshank, Julie (1990) Getting the Words Right: Perspectives on Naming and Places in Athapaskan Oral History, in *Arctic Archaeology* 27(1), 52-65.

Crystal, David (2000) *Language Death,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Davis, Richard (2003) What is a Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study? Unpublished document.

Davis, Richard (2007) Notes from presentation on the LRCFN Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, May 22nd, 2007.

Ekback, Donald H. (1977) I left my heart among the Cree. *The Alliance Witness Newsletter*. October 19th, 1977.

Federal Government of Canada (1996) Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, vol. 2 Ottawa: Communication Group.

Federal Government of Canada, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (1991) The Matter of the Constitution of the Loon River Cree Band in the Province of Alberta", Ministerial Order, December 4th, 1991

Fishman, Joshua (2000) *Can Threatened Languages Be Saved? Reversing Language Shift Revisited: a 21st Century Perspective.* Cleveland, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Fishman, Joshua. (2006). *DO NOT Leave Your Language Alone: The Hidden Status Agenda Within Corpus Planning in Language Policy.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Fort McKay First Nation (1994) *There is Still Survival Out There: A Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study of the Fort McKay First Nation.* Calgary: Arctic Institute of North America.

Foster, K. Neil (1971) In the Frigid Land of the Cree. *The Alliance Witness Newsletter.* May 26th, 1971.

Foster, Michael. (1982) Canada's First Languages. Language and Society. Languages of Canada Series, 1. Ottawa: Government of Canada, Commissioner of Official Languages.

Fraser, Alfred and Linda, Corstan (1976) General Information Re: Isolated Communities in Northern Alberta. *Registered Indian Population in Canada by Bands, showing Treaties, Reserves, and Approximate Acreage (Mainly about Alberta Region).* National Indian Brotherhood, November 1976.

Fumoleau, René (2004) *As long as this land shall last: a history of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11, 1870-1939* Calgary: University of Calgary Press

Goddard, John (1991) *Last Stand of the Lubicon Cree.* Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre.

Honda-McNeil, Jamie and Denise, Parsons (eds.) (2003) *Best Practices of Traditional Land Use Studies.* Edmonton: Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.

Honda-McNeil, Jamie (2007) Alberta's Traditional Land Use Study Initiative. Paper presented at the 4th Interjurisdictional Symposium on Aboriginal Involvement in Resource Management, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. September 12th, 2007.

Hymes, Dell (1974) *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Krauss, Michael (1976). Evidence in Chief. Proceedings, Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, Vol. 192, 29966-95.

Isaac, Thomas and Anthony Knox. (2003) The Crown's Duty to Consult Aboriginal People. *Alberta Law Review* 41(1), 49-77.

Lawrence, Sonia and Patrick Mcklem (2000) From Consultation to Reconciliation: Aboriginal Rights and the Crown's Duty to Consult. *The Canadian Bar Review* 79, 252-279.

Liddicoat, A. and R. Baldauf (eds.) (2008) *Language Planning in Local Contexts*. Frankfurt Lodge, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Loon River Cree First Nation (2003) *Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Pamphlet*.

Loon River Cree First Nation (2006) *Loon River First Nation Consultation Unit: Consultation Policies and Procedures.*

Loon River Cree First Nation (In Production) *"Eskopihk ekwa Anohch", Then and Now: A Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study by the Loon River Cree First Nation.* Eva Whitehead, Laverne Letendre, Richard Davis, Barry Hochstein, and Christine Schreyer (eds.)

Mansell, R. L. (1970) "A Socio-Economic Study of Isolated Communities in Northern Alberta", Report for Human Resources Development Authority, Government of Alberta, Research and Planning Division, V. T. Janssen, Head. Edmonton, July 1970.

Manriquez, L. Frank (2001) Silent No More: California Indians Reclaim their culture- and they invite you to listen. In L. Maffi (ed), *On Biocultural Diversity: Linking Languages, Knowledge and the Environment* (pp. 540-545) Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press.

McGarvey, Gerald E. (1956) Buried in the Bush. *The Alliance Witness Newsletter.* May 30th, 1956.

Morantz, Toby (1992) Aboriginal Land Claims in Canada. Coates, Ken (ed), *Aboriginal Land Claims in Canada: A Regional* Perspective, (pp. 101-130) Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, Ltd.

Morris, Alexander (1991) *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories*. Winnipeg: Fifth House Publishers

Mühlhäusler, Peter (2001) Ecolinguistics, Linguistic Diversity, Ecological Diversity. In L. Maffi (ed.), *On Biocultural Diversity: Linking Languages, Knowledge and the Environment* (pp.133-144). Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Nettle, David and Suzanne Romaine (2000) *Vanishing Voices: The Extinction of the World's languages.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Petrovic, John E. (2005) The Conservative Restoration and Neoliberal Defenses of Bilingual Education. *Language Policy* 4, 395-416.

Posey, Darrell (2001) Biological and Cultural Diversity: The Inextricable, Linked by Language and Politics, In L. Maffi (ed.), *On Biocultural Diversity: Linking Languages, Knowledge and the Environment* (pp, 379-396).Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Ricento, Thomas (2005) Problems with the 'language- as-resource' discourse in the promotion of heritage languages in the USA. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 3(3), 348--68.

Rodman, Margaret (1992) Empowering Place: Multilocality and Multivocality. *American Anthropologist* 94(3), 640-656.

Rosaldo, Renato (1980) *Illongot Headhunting, 1883-1974.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Royal Proclamation of Britain (1763) In Referencing Indian Country. London, England.

Ruiz, Richard (1984) Orientations in language planning. *NABE Journal: the Journal of the National Association for Bilingual Education,* 8(2): 15-34

Sachdev, I. (1998) Language Use and Attitudes Among the Fisher River Cree in Manitoba. *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 22 (1), 108-119.

Sawchuk, Patricia and Jarvis, Grey (1980) The Isolated Communities of Northern Alberta, Métis and the Land: Report of the Land Claims Section (Edmonton: Métis Association of Alberta, 1980)

Schreyer, Christine (2006) Re-Orientations in Language Planning: A language-as-cultural-resource model". In R. Elaingaiyan et al (eds), *Foundation for Endangered Languages Tenth Conference- Vital Voices: Endangered Languages and Multilingualism* (pp. 179-184). Central Institute for Indian Languages, Mysore, India and Foundation for Endangered Languages, York, England.

Schreyer, Christine (2006) Unpublished field notes. Loon Lake, Alberta. September 25th until October 6th, 2006.

Schreyer, Christine (2007) Unpublished field notes. Loon Lake, Alberta. February 20th until February 24th, 2007.

Schreyer, Christine (2008) Land and Language: The Power of Traditional Land Use Studies to Revitalize and Maintain. Paper presented at the North West Anthropological Conference. Victoria, BC, April 24th, 2008.

Schreyer, Christine and L. Gordon (2007) Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêstres : Un projet de revitalisation linguistique par le jeu. (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths: Fun and Games in Language Revitalization.) *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 31 (1), 143-162.

Szatylo, Deborah (2002) Recognition and Reconciliation: An Alberta Fact or Fiction? The Duty to Consult in Alberta and the Impact on the Oil and Gas Industry. *Indigenous Law Journal* 1, 201-236.

Taylor, Solange G. (2002) Multilingual Societies and Planned Linguistic Change: New Language-in-Education Programs in Estonia and South Africa. *Comparative Education Review* 46(3), 313-338.

Thornton, Thomas (2003) Place Names and the Language of Subsistence in Southeast Alaska. In J Blythe and R. McKenna Brown (eds.), *maintaining the Links: Language, Identity, and the Land, Proceedings of the seventh conference presented by the Foundation for Endangered Languages* (pp. 29-35). Bath, UK: The Foundation for Endangered Languages.

Westman, C. (2008) Understanding Cree Religious Discourse. Unpublished PhD Manuscript. Department of Anthropology, University of Alberta. Edmonton, Alberta.

Court Cases Referenced:

R. v Sparrow [1990] 1. S.C.R 1075 [*Sparrow*]

Delgamuukw v. British Columbia, [1997] 3 S.C.R. 1113.

Haida Nation v. *British Columbia (Minister of Forests)* [2002] 6 W.W.R 243 (B.C.C.A) [*Haida]*

Haida Nation v. British Columbia (Minister of Forests), [2004] 3 S.C.R. 511, 2004 SCC 73

Websites Referenced:

Terminology Guidelines from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/wf/index_e.html

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/rpt/wrd_e.html)

Friends of the Lubicon website: http://www.tao.ca/~fol/

List of Interviews

Noskey, Arthur. (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. February 23rd, 2007 at Loon Lake, Alberta.

Noskey, Jerry. (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. May 23rd, 2007 at Red Earth Creek, Alberta

Ward, Kenny. (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. September 6th, 2007. Loon Lake, Alberta.

Chapter Four: Negotiating Language on Negotiated Land[1]

Introduction

Language ideologies incorporate political, economic, and social aspects of culture, and, within Canada, the land claims process also affects each of these facets. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that language ideology has also been affected by the land claims process in Aboriginal communities across Canada. Language ideologies can be defined as the "self-evident ideas and objectives a group holds concerning roles of language in the social experience of members as they contribute to the expression of the group" (Woolard and Schieffelin, 1994: 57) and they are an essential part of social identity as it is through language that social facts are shared and constructed within a community (Searle, 1995). In their article on language ideologies (1994) Woolard and Schieffelin write that:

> The topic of language ideology is a much needed bridge between linguistic and social theory because it relates the microculture of communicative action to political economic considerations of power and social inequality confronting macrosocial constraints on language behaviour (Woolard and Schieffelin, 1994: 72).

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that language ideology has also been affected by the land claims process in Aboriginal[2] communities across Canada. The strong connection between language and land amongst Indigenous people around the world has been the focus of much anthropological work (Basso, 1996;

---

[1] A version of this chapter has been accepted for publication. Schreyer (To Appear). Journal of Linguistic Anthropology.

[2] The term aboriginal (as is the practice in Canada) is inclusive of all native peoples of Canada, also known as First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. The term Indigenous, when it is used, will refer to those people who are original inhabitants of a particular land.

Cruikshank, 1981, 1990; Thornton, 2003, 2008; Brody, 2000, 1988; Rosaldo, 1980; Collignon, 2006), but how has the land claims process affected community discourse?

Within this article, I will argue that just as reality can be socially constructed (Berger and Luckman, 1966), so too can the identities that we put forth as individuals and as members of a community, and language is an essential element of this construction. Following Ochs (1994), I will argue that:

> …social identities have a sociohistorical reality independent of language behavior, but, in any given actual situation, at any given actual moment, people in those situations are actively constructing their social identities rather than passively living out some cultural prescription for social identity. Interlocutors are actively constructing themselves as members of a community… (296).

Not only do interlocutors construct themselves as members of a community, but a community will define themselves in relation to the outside world. Fentress and Wickham argue:

> Perhaps the most powerful element…is the memory of the community in opposition to the outside world, for this is one of the most effective resources any group has to reinforce its own social identity in opposition to that of others…(1992:114)

Within land claims negotiations there is absolutely a distinction between the Aboriginal community and "the other" (the Euro-Canadian community, specifically the federal and provincial governments with whom they are negotiating), particularly in the manner in which each party views the land (Nadasdy, 2001). Identity is also a product of co-construction, which Jacoby and Ochs define as, "the joint creation of a form, interpretation, stance, action, activity, identity, institution, skill, ideology, emotion, or other culturally meaningful

reality" (1995: 171). Therefore, "the other" is necessarily included in the creation of a "social identity" and co-construction will affect the choices a community makes in terms of public language use that support their social identity.

This paper will use ethnographic evidence from two First Nations[3] communities in order to compare the impact that land claims have had on their socially constructed identities, which are revealed through their community discourse. The two First Nations I work with are the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, located in Atlin, British Columbia and the Loon River Cree First Nation, located in Loon Lake, Alberta. The Taku River Tlingit First Nation is in the process of negotiating their comprehensive claim with the Federal and Provincial governments whilst Loon River settled their specific land claim in 1999. Every land claim situation is unique and there are significant differences in the way that the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree have constructed their identities and this has blended into the language maintenance strategies within their communities, which I will discuss below.

Land Claims and Language

In her self-reflexive discussion of Linguistic Anthropology in Canada (2005), Darnell outlines the various and numerous research projects she has been involved with since her arrival on the Canadian anthropological scene at the University of Alberta in 1969. In her comments regarding her work on the

[3] The term First Nation refers to those individuals who are status Indians. According to the terminology guidelines provided by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada status Indians are "Indians recognized under the Indian Act" a document created in 1876 that regulates the federal government's obligations to her Aboriginal population (http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/wf/trmrslt_e.asp?term=12).

language and culture of the Plains Cree she writes that following the push for Aboriginal control of education in the 1970s "[a] rhetoric began to develop of language and land as parallel pillars of political aspirations" (2005: 158). Following the 1973 *Calder* case in British Columbia, in which three of the seven Supreme Court judges ruled that the Aboriginal Title of the Nisga'a in their traditional lands still existed (Cassidy, 1992), land rights moved to the forefront of political action from its former parallel position. The *Calder* court decision was one of the impetuses for the Federal Government recognizing their obligation to Canada's Aboriginal people; and, across Canada, Aboriginal communities began to more forcibly negotiate for their land rights while language rights did not become prominent until a decade later (Foster, 1982).

Within Canada there are two distinct types of land claims – specific and comprehensive[4]. As Charles Menzies writes, the main principle "underlying First Nations' land claims is the doctrine of aboriginal title and whether or not title has been extinguished" (1994: 778). According to Slattery, Aboriginal Title is "a legal right derived from the native peoples' historic occupation of tribal lands. That title both predated and survived the claims to sovereignty made by European nations in colonizing North America" (Slattery, 1987:729). Land claims have become a fact of life for most, if not all, Aboriginal people in Canada and depending on their historical, political, and economic circumstances the type of land claim they are involved in will be different. The majority of claims across

[4]As land claims negotiations have become more and more complicated, "an unnamed third category of claims has developed to deal with Aboriginal grievances that fall within the spirit of the comprehensive and specific claims policies, but do not meet strict acceptance criteria" (http://www.newparksnorth.org/aboriginal_landclaims.htm).

Canada fall under the "specific" category, which are seen as "unfulfilled treaty entitlements that are legally outstanding to the First Nation by Canada" (McNab, 1992:77). A specific claim might arise for a number of reasons including: not enough land being given to a community, miscounts of population at the time of treaty signing, poor quality land originally being given, land being taken away or sold, and being missed in the signing of the Treaty that covered their traditional territory. The second category of land claim is known as a comprehensive claim, and is defined as "those that cover a large geographic area in which no treaty or other agreement has been signed with the First Nations" (McNab, 1992:77). These usually take longer to negotiate because they involve larger land areas and many alternative factors (such as self-governance, resource management, and educational control).

An example that illustrates the prevalence of land claims in Canadian society, particularly in the north, comes from Cruikshank (1997). She writes:

> A story now told in the Yukon describes a visitor invited to a primary school classroom in the early 1990s asking children what they hope to do when they finished school. A youngster waved his hand enthusiastically. His choice? "A land claims negotiator!" (Cruikshank, 1997: 66).

Cruikshank, working in the Yukon where a comprehensive land claim agreement was ratified by most Yukon First Nations in 1994, writes that this quote is often used to show the inertia of land claims negotiations. However, even after they are settled they are "in no way a finite and bounded solution" (1997: 66) and negotiations will continue as the agreements are implemented. This leads to what Sullivan calls the "ceaseless engagement" (Sullivan, 2006: 54) that Aboriginal communities need to participate in so they can assert their sovereignty and place

as nations within the wider nation-state of Canada (Darnell, 2002; Saul, 1997). Nadasdy, who has written about the land claims process in the Yukon (2001), specifically related to land management issues, argues that:

> If, in the context of the modern nation-state, aboriginal people wish to claim some form of control over their lands, and they wish those claims to be seen as legitimate by others, they must as Richard Handler puts it, speak "in a language that power understands" (1991: 71). And that language is, and has long been, the language of property (2001: 253).

McDougall and Philips Valentine have also described the connection between the legal domain and land claims and the impact this has had on the identities that communities create in relation to the land claim they are involved in. McDougall and Philips Valentine argue that:

> Since land claims in Canada are firmly entrenched in the legal domain, assertions of treaty rights rest on past entitlements. Political history becomes a major factor in the construction of identity in such cases…If care of land was the test of the validity of a claim, for example, then environmental and agricultural practice would form the substance of the narrative. Because the narratives are driven by the disciplinary context (especially legal entitlement), the construction of identity in the land claims cases share many characteristics regardless of the community arguing the case (2001: 4).

It is true that each Aboriginal community must follow the legal procedures of the land claims process and use the language of "the other" in order to argue their claim; and this causes similarities in the social identity they are constructing. However, the political, historical, economic and social situation will differ in each case, and parts of their identities and the narratives they construct will be different as well. Through the course of my work on the relationship between land claims and community discourse it has become evident to me that the land claims process has indeed impacted the social identity of both the Taku River Tlingit and

the Loon River Cree, but both communities have constructed unique identities related to the type of land claim they are involved in and their unique social history. Also, although both communities use land and language as rhetorical devices for their political agendas (Darnell, 2005); they do not use them as parallelisms. The rhetoric on land rights, which are often framed around the idea of the First Nation as a self-governing body or "nation", are far more prominent in public discourse than rhetoric on language rights, especially within the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. The following section will briefly look at the use of rhetoric within both land and language negotiations, and the differences in the socially constructed identities between the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree.

Community - Internal Land and Language Advocacy

Jane Hill's well-known article *"Expert Rhetorics" in Advocacy for Endangered Languages: Who is Listening and What Do They Hear?* (2002) offers a critique of the ways in which experts have discussed their work on endangered languages because of a "failure to think critically about the multiple audiences who may hear and read advocacy rhetoric" (2002:119). Although multiple authors have provided commentary on this article since its publication (Chafe, 2003; England, 2002), Leanne Hinton's commentary takes as her point of consideration the difference between "*community-internal advocacy and community-external advocacy*" (2002:151). She argues that the following themes are more prevalent in community-internal rhetoric than those discussed by Hill:

1) Language as healing
2) Language as *key to identity*
3) Language as key to spirituality
4) Language as carrier of culture and worldview (Hinton, 2002: 152, emphasis added).

The Aboriginal Languages Task Force of Canada, a federally funded body, utilized all of these themes within their report to the Federal Government which outlined "a national strategy to preserve, revitalize and promote First Nation, Inuit, and Métis languages and culture" (2005:1). However, within the Aboriginal Languages Task Force report two *other* rhetorical themes are also utilized. First, the Task Force writes, "First Nation, Inuit and Métis languages show that the people are not separate from the land. They have a responsibility to protect it and preserve the sacred and traditional knowledge associated with it" (2005: 2). Stewardship over traditional lands is one of the main focuses of discourse surrounding land claims, and this theme is evident in the discourse of both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree communities (as will be seen in the following sections).

The Aboriginal Languages Task Force also writes that, "language and culture are key to the collective sense of identity and nationhood of the First Nation, Inuit, and Métis peoples" (2005: 2). Rhetoric on "nationhood" has often been used in land claims negotiations, especially in comprehensive claims where Aboriginal Title to the land has never been extinguished, but it is rarely seen in rhetoric on languages rights. For example, as early as 1763, the relationship between the Crown and Canada's Aboriginal people had been laid out in documents pertaining to the recognition of Aboriginal Title to the land in the

Royal Proclamation. This document, created by the British Government, specifically outlined Britain's policy on Aboriginal people in the British colonies in the Americas, and specifically describes them as "nations" (Morantz, 1992). It states that:

> … the several *Nations* or Tribes of Indians with whom We are connected, and who live under our Protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the Possession of such Parts of Our Dominions and Territories as, not having been ceded or purchased by Us, are reserved to them, or any of them, as their Hunting Grounds … (Royal Proclamation, 1763, emphasis added).

The Royal Proclamation is often cited by First Nations in political discourse in order to claim title to the land. However, it wasn't until the Berger Inquiry on the construction of the MacKenzie Valley pipeline that an Aboriginal group began to refer to themselves as a Nation. In September of 1975 the Dene people of the Northwest Territories, unanimously passed a declaration at Fort Simpson which stated the following:

> We the Dene of the N.W.T insist on the right to be regarded by ourselves and the world as a Nation. Our struggle is for the recognition of the Dene Nation by the Government and the people of Canada and the peoples and governments of the world…Our plea to the world is to help us in our struggle to find a place in the world community where we can exercise our right to self-determination as a distinct people and as a Nation. What we seek then is independence and self-determination within the country of Canada. That is what we mean when we call for a just land settlement for the Dene Nation (http://www.denenation.com/denedec.html).

This call for recognition was rejected by a minister of the department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development the following day (INAC, backgrounder on the Dene Nation land claim). As Jull writes:

> …the mere name of the Dene Nation, when adopted in 1975, set off a frenzy in Ottawa, with one minister publishing an attack poster in reply.

> The fact that King George III had no trouble with the word 'nation" for indigenous peoples 200 years earlier was apparently forgotten (Jull, 2001: 14).

It should be noted that within their declaration for nationhood, the Dene Nation does not include their Dene language as one of their key points, but focuses instead on issues related to land rights.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) was established on August 26th, 1991, and has also addressed the "Native Nations" of Canada. The commission was given an extensive mandate to:

> Investigate the evolution of the relationship among aboriginal peoples (Indian, Inuit, and Métis), the Canadian government, and Canadian society as a whole. It should propose specific solutions, rooted in domestic and international experience, the problems which have plagued those relationships and which confront aboriginal peoples today. The Commission should examine all issues which it deems to be relevant to any and all of the aboriginal peoples of Canada (RCAP, Vol. 1:1).

Within the five volumes that describe the findings of the RCAP and their recommendations it is written, "We advocate recognition of Aboriginal nations within Canada as political entities through which Aboriginal Peoples can express their distinctive identity within the context of their Canadian citizenship" (RCAP, Vol. 5). The summary of the findings is titled "People to People, Nation to Nation", and within RCAP, the definition of a nation includes the following factors: "collective sense of identity; size as a measure of capacity; and territorial predominance" (RCAP, Vol. 2 Chapter 3). The role of language is contained specifically in the phrase "collective sense of identity", which includes: "…common history, *language*, culture, traditions, political consciousness, laws, government structures, spirituality, ancestry and homeland" (RCAP, VOL. 2,

Chap. 3, emphasis added). Although language is touched upon here, the idea that every nation needs to have a shared common language is not found within the discussions of nationhood in the RCAP reports. Nationhood, then, has not often been historically used for promoting Aboriginal languages despite the recognized belief that "Nation and language have become inextricably intertwined. Every self respecting nation has to have a language" (Haugen 1966: 927). I believe the Aboriginal Languages Task Force was attempting to reverse this trend by utilizing the rhetoric of nationhood that Aboriginal communities have successfully used in land claims negotiations since the 1970s. However, at the community level, both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree did not use nationhood rhetoric in respect to language maintenance and revitalization. Rather their social identities are based on historical and contemporary connections to the land, and language is just one of the resources that they consider to be a part of the land (Schreyer, 2007; Schreyer, 2008). The following sections will outline the impact of land claims on both the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's and the Loon River Cree First Nation's social identities. I will also outline the connection between these identities and the language revitalization and maintenance strategies that each of the communities have employed.

Anohch ekwa Ekospîhk (Now and Then) and the Loon River Cree

The Loon River Cree First Nation has successfully negotiated a specific land claim based on unfulfilled Treaty rights and in doing so they have constructed a social identity for their community that revolves around a historical

narrative. Two key elements of this narrative include: 1) that the community members have lived their lives as "status Indians" (as defined by Treaty 8[5] and as opposed to "Métis"[6]) and 2) that they have an in-depth knowledge of the land. Previously known as one of the "isolated communities" of northern Alberta, the Loon River Cree First Nation's traditional territory is located within the Treaty 8 area of Alberta, approximately 175 kilometres north of Lesser Slave Lake in north-central Alberta. Loon River signed an addendum to Treaty 8 in 1999 one hundred yeas after it was originally signed. The most commonly referenced reason behind Loon River's members absence from the signing of Treaty 8 in 1899 is that the Treaty commissioners traveled by major rivers, and the Loon River Cree were missed because they lived "in the bush" between the rivers (J. Noskey, 2007). According to Arthur Noskey, current Chief of Loon River:

> They say that a lot of the commissioners traveled by the water ways, which was the Wabasca River to the east of us, and Peace River to the west, Saskatchewan to the south, and then the Peace River goes north. So, we're in the hub of the waterways, and I think that's how a lot of the people were missed … its all bush [and the commissioners] had to travel cross country. I think waterways were the best way to travel. I think that's how they got missed out … Fort MacMurray, I know they were found … It's just us being in the middle [who weren't].

Neil Reddekopp in his compilation of the history of the Loon Lake community (1998) writes that, "the isolation of Loon Lake continued into the 1950s" (54) until Christian Alliance Missionary Clarence Jaycox reached Loon River and

---

[5] From 1871 to 1939, the government of Canada signed eleven treaties, known as "the numbered treaties", with Aboriginal groups across Canada. For more information on these treaties see: Morris, Alexander (1991) *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories*. Toronto: Fifth House Publishers. For information on Treaty 8 specifically see: Fumoleau, René. (2004) *As long as this land shall last: a history of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11, 1870-1939*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press

[6] The term Métis refers to those individuals of First Nation and European ancestry, usually Scottish or French

opened a school in the community (Reddekopp, 1998; Westman, 2008). Prior to the community members' recognition as "status Indians", they were often believed to be Métis. For example, in *The Métis and the Land in Alberta: Land Claims Research Project 1979-1980*, published by the Métis Association of Alberta the community profile for Loon Lake states, "Loon Lake is a predominantly Métis community … as in the other communities we visited, trapping and hunting are actively pursued" (Sawchuk and Grey, 1980: 290). As well, in 1970, the population of Loon Lake was recorded at 150 people and 121 of those were listed as Métis (Mansell, 1970). Finally, the use of Cree language was also an important part of the Loon River Cree First Nation's social identity as a "status Indian". This can be seen in a quote from the Métis land claims research report that states "the Métis and Non-Status Indians in the isolated communities today have maintained strong ties with their Cree ancestry. Cree is still the most commonly used, everyday language and Indian identity is important" (1980: 276).[7]

The fact that the Loon River Cree were missed in the signing of Treaty 8 could have been cause to argue, as their neighbour, the Lubicon Lake Nation, has argued (Goddard, 1991; Martin-Hill, 2008), that Loon River's Aboriginal Rights to the land including Aboriginal Title had never been extinguished. In fact, Jerry Noskey, former Band Councilor from Loon Lake, stated "to a certain extent Lubicon is right in their claim" (2006). However, the Loon River Cree First

[7] The Métis community is more often associated with the Michif language, which has been described as, "the unique national language of the Métis, [that] has evolved on the historical basis of Cree verbs and sentence structure and French-derived noun phrases" (Aboriginal Languages Task Force, 2005: 33).

Nation chose to file a specific land claim based on the conditions of Treaty 8 instead. When I asked Arthur Noskey why the Loon River Cree decided to file a specific land claim rather than joining the Lubicon Cree in their comprehensive claim, he replied:

> I think the reason behind that is the fact that a lot of the people in the community were basically status, and they lived their lives as though they were status Indians that had no other land claim in Treaty 8 territory.

The Loon River Cree First Nation's identity is composed in part, therefore, by their recognition as "status Indians". Richard Davis, the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Manager for the Loon River Cree, has also stated that (2007) the Loon River Cree community members are second and third generation from the original Treaty 8, and that their adhesion to Treaty 8 in 1999 was no different than the original treaty of 1899. Official recognition of the historical narrative of the community members as "status Indians" came with the granting of band status to the community due to a federal government Ministerial Order in 1991.

Following recognition of the community's historical narrative, knowledge of the land became a secondary point for the community's construction of their social identity in order to secure their settlement in the land claims process. In discussing the issues surrounding the land claim negotiations Arthur Noskey stated:

> The important issue was recognizing a land base by finalizing the reserve boundaries. The difficulty with that was that a lot of our traditional lands had mineral lease allocations that were done in the area, and also there's a lot of oil and gas activity. So at the negotiation table the government recommended to us that we should relocate to low-find lands, where there aren't any mineral leases and no applications; basically lands that were worth nothing. But when we consulted with our members they said, "No,

> this is where we've always been, and this is the land where we want a settlement."

With the settlement of their land claim, the community received a total of 44,800 acres of reserve lands which was then split into three reserves. They also received $2 million in compensation. The locations of the three reserves were chosen because they have historical importance to the Loon River Cree community members. For example, one of the reserves is a small piece of land located north of Loon Lake called *Maskotîk* or Loon Prairie. Arthur Noskey described for me the history behind that location, and why it was chosen as a reserve:

> There used to be cabins there and it was basically a wintering site. There's hayfields there where people used to go in the summer time and collect hay, but basically it's a wintering place where they'd migrate to when winter sets in. When men were out on the trapline the women and kids were there and it was more of a small community.

Again, it is the historical connection to the land that was important in the negotiation process with the provincial and federal governments. Goddard, in his account of the neighbouring Lubicon Cree Nation, describes the "isolated communities" of the Alberta Interior including Loon River. He writes:

> Most of the people living at Lubicon, Loon, Trout, Peerless, Sandy, and Chipweyan lakes had been stripped of Indian status. As communities they also remained without band status, except for the Lubicon band, with only 30 recognized members. All six groups were living reasonably well by hunting and trapping, but without Indian status and band recognition they had almost no way of pursuing land rights; and without protected land title they were poorly equipped, in the face of advancing oil exploration, to survive as distinct aboriginal peoples (1991: 31).

Land was important for survival not only in the past, but also currently in the face of contemporary economic development. Martin-Hill, an anthropologist who has

worked with the Lubicon Lake Nation, has written that, "Deals such as those offered to the Woodland Cree[8], who signed away their Aboriginal title and their right to protect the land in return for superficial benefits such as fast cash and houses go against Lubicon logic and beliefs" (2008:158). However, for the Loon River Cree it was only through the settlement of their specific land claim that they were able to acquire rights to the land and have some input into the development that would occur in their traditional territory. Also, once issues of land were resolved, other important issues for the community such as economic development, housing, construction of infrastructure, education, and health care have also been settled since the land claim was concluded (Noskey, 2006).

The Loon River Cree First Nation's Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study was another favorable development out of the land claim settlement. Due to the fact that the Loon River Cree were now officially recognized as "status Indians", who had historically acknowledged use of land in the Treaty 8 area, the community was able to acquire funding for the study which further investigates their use of the land. Community members Eva Whitehead, Laverne Letendre, and Kenny Ward worked together under the direction of Richard Davis, a Cree consultant from Swan River, Alberta, and Barry Hochstein, a Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study consultant, in order to "get the stories and knowledge from these elders - their history" (Ward, 2007), and to learn "how the people lived off the land, and how the land was used in the past and how it is being used currently" (Davis, 2007). The findings of the Traditional Land Use and

[8] Woodland Cree First Nation is similar to Loon River because they were also formed as a band in the early 1990s and were neighbours of the Lubicon.

Occupancy Study further expand on the socially constructed identity that the Loon River Cree First Nation stressed to the outside world during their land claims negotiations. The community is currently in the process of publishing a Traditional Land Use Atlas entitled *Anohch ekwa Ekospîhk* (Now and Then). This book continues to emphasize the importance of the historical narratives within the community's identity, but also focuses on contemporary land use as evidenced from the title. This focus on the "now" is important in the face of continued logging, and oil and gas development within the Loon River Cree First Nation's traditional territory.

Since the completion of the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, the team has merged into a Consultation Unit and one of their first mandates was to create a policy outlining their role in consultation with government and industry. Their document of policies and procedures outlines their responsibilities as including:

- Protect[ing] LRFN members' *Treaty and Aboriginal rights*
- Protect[ing] the *environment* on reserve and within LRFN traditional use area
- Protect[ing] the *culture, language* and lifestyle of the LRFN community and membership (Loon River Consultation Unit, Policies and Procedures, 2006, emphasis added).

As well, their goals also include "assist[ing] LRFN member trappers with *awareness and understanding* of resource development activities affecting their registered fur management area" (Loon River Consultation Unit, Policies and Procedures, 2006, emphasis added). In May of 2007, the Consultation Unit had already processed 171 referrals from industry and government in their traditional land use area (Davis, 2007).

In discussing the merger of the Traditional Land Use study team into a Consultation Unit and the connection to the land claim team member Kenny Ward stated that the land claim was important to have settled because "they [the community] wouldn't have been able to have this working area [from the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study], and they couldn't have had too much say. Once you have a reserve in place you have a little bit more say in things" (Ward, 2007). He also stressed that the identity of the community has changed since the land claim because without the land claim the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study "would have been just a story about how people survived back then, instead of how people survive now. It's survival on the land" (Ward, 2007). From these statements we can see that the Loon River Cree First Nation has relied on historical narratives to settle their land claim and to gain power over the lands and resources not just within their reserves, but throughout their traditional area. Settling a land claim allowed them to develop the community capacity to conduct a research intensive study on their own, enabling them to have more control over other parts of development on their land including both education and language.

Na mokatch nika poni âchimon **(I will never quit telling stories)**

When I began my research with both the Loon River Cree and the Taku River Tlingit, I volunteered to work for their communities in some way. Both communities chose language curriculum projects, but following careful analysis of the social identities of the communities I realized that the language projects they had chosen also worked to support each community's unique social identity.

The description of the project I conducted with the Taku River Tlingit will follow, but I will concentrate here on the language project that the Loon River Cree chose for their community. My original proposal to volunteer first reached Mayble Noskey, a Band Councilor within Loon River, who is in charge of educational programs in the community. Mayble passed my name and information on to Richard Davis, the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study manager, and together they had the idea to incorporate the information from the study into Cree storybooks. These books could then be used as part of the Cree curriculum in the Loon Lake community school (Schreyer, 2008). The storybooks also include the historical narratives that form the social identity of the Loon River Cree First Nation, and this enables the youth of the community to acquire and incorporate this knowledge into their own generational social identity.

Following the signing of the addendum to Treaty 8, the Loon River Cree gained control over their school system and implemented Cree language curriculum in response to a decline in Cree language use at home. Arthur Noskey described this in our interview:

> I think that as far as the language being used in the community, I think it's getting so you don't hear it as much as you used to. I think we're slowly losing it. And it has its pros and cons to it. Like for me when I was going to school as a five year old I had to learn the English language before I could start understanding the work that was before me. As a Cree speaking kid learning English was a struggle, and it probably put us back a year and a half in the educational process having to learn the language first. So, right now I think a lot of the parents, some of the younger generation anyway, the first language now is English, and they speak more English now then they do Cree. So the kids are growing up now anywhere from say 12 and under, maybe 14 and under, and some of them can understand but don't speak it, some of them don't understand anything at all. So, I think it's an area where there's a lack of elder involvement or just basically the lack of practicing the language is how we're losing it (2006).

Within the community there is an emphasis on continuing to learn to speak the Cree language, but there is also a desire that children learn to read and write Cree, as well as acquiring literacy skills in English. The set of storybooks entitled *Na mokatch nika poni âchimon* (I will never quit telling stories) includes eight different books. The title comes from a quote from one of the elderly ladies in the community, and the books are formed from the quotes of the Loon River Cree elders on a variety of topics such as moose hunting, berry picking, fishing, and trapping. Many of these activities have reduced in frequency in recent years, and are more closely associated with *ekospîhk* (then), rather than *anohch* (now).

The storybooks serve to perpetuate the social identity of the Loon River Cree in a variety of ways, but the incorporation of language further strengthens their identity as distinct from other First Nations because of the dialect that is used within the books. As Patricia Shaw writes, "Dialect was, and continues to be, an important marker of distinct local identity" (2001: 50). During the creation of the storybooks, it became clear that the members of the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study team with whom I was working did not want to use the well-known Cree orthography that is usually associated with Cree in southern Alberta (Ward, 2007). Curriculum in this orthography is currently used in the Loon Lake School and the Loon River Cree community members wanted to have a writing system that would address the differences in how they say words. I was explicitly told that if the southern standard writing system was used the elders would wonder where their grandchildren had learnt their Cree (Schreyer, fieldnotes, 2007). Shaw has also written:

> A major motivation for language retention and revitalization is the deep-seated recognition that language is an integral part of identity. However, one's unique identity is intimately defined by one's own local dialect. Therefore, to teach a different dialect, a recognized marker of *another* group's distinctive identity, is fundamentally at odds with the vital affirmation of one's own identity that language constitutes (2001:51, emphasis in the original).

For Loon River Cree community members, using the standard Cree orthography goes against their social constructed identity. Southern Cree speakers have very different histories, partially because they were not as isolated as the people of Loon Lake, and because of this have a different relationship to the land and land claims. As Arthur Noskey states:

> We've always pursued the idea that since we're about 100 years too late with our addendum to Treaty 8 that there should be some unique privileges that we should have and both sides at the federal and the provincial level have agreed to that kind of process.

Therefore, the orthography of the southern dialect does not fully represent the Loon River Cree. As Woolard and Schieffelin write, "orthographic systems cannot be conceptualized simply as reducing speech to writing, but rather they are symbols that carry historical, cultural and political meanings" (1994: 65).

The storybooks are tied to the Loon River Cree social identity, but they also serve to illustrate the trend that has occurred amongst First Nations across Canada since the 1970's that has led to the hierarchical prominence of land above language within political strategies. During my work on the storybooks, I was firmly situated within the Lands and Resources sector of the community in order to complete this project, and it has been my experience that "on the ground" language work is more often tied to the lands department than any other department. It can of course be argued that this is because of "the First Nations'

people's inalienable identification of language with the land" (Shaw, 2001:40). I believe this has further reaching significance, however, in terms of political strategies and money available within the community. Within the Loon River Cree First Nation, therefore, the community is putting forth a social identity that is based on a strong historical connection to the land and living a traditional lifestyle as "status Indians". A cohesive history was important in order for them to settle their land claim quickly, and hence give them more control over their traditional territory, as well as a land base where economic development and education can co-exist. The prevailing theme within the Loon River Cree First Nation is *Anohch ekwa Ekospîhk* (Now and Then), and this has played out in the language projects that have been created – a desire to develop stable bilingualism within the community. They want to be able to invest in the present and future (knowing English) while celebrating the past (knowing Cree). Arthur Noskey concluded his interview with me by stating, "I've always envisioned Loon River as basically a self-sustaining community, and that still is the vision" (Noskey, 2006). Kenny Ward also talked about his vision for the future when he stated, "I think [forming relationships with oil companies] is in our best interests for our future so we can keep our kids here.... I don't think it will be hard to get there, I think it will just be easy going; it should be easy going" (Ward, 2007). The Loon River Cree First Nation actively pursues consultation in their traditional territory and has also attempted to form relationships with companies. This can be considered a continuation of the negotiation of their social identity, which Sullivan labels as "performatives of sovereignty" (2006: 54) such as joint

ventures between First Nations in British Columbia and foreign companies also are. The vision for Loon River includes "ceaseless engagement" (Sullivan, 2006) of their land rights as well as a bilingual future for their children.

Ha Tlatki Ha Kustiyi (Our Land – Our Way of Life) and the Taku River Tlingit

The Taku River Tlingit First Nation is currently in the process of negotiating a comprehensive land claim, and like the Loon River Cree, their land claim has affected the social construction of their community identity – an identity that they put forth to the public. Unlike the Loon River Cree, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's identity is focused foremost on their continued use of their traditional land rather than on historic narratives of land use as "status Indians" as this categorization has never been in question for the members of Taku River. Communities involved in comprehensive land claims often have to prove their continued use of the land since "time immemorial" (INAC, 1996) and because of this history will obviously play a role in the Taku River Tlingit's social identity as well. The Taku River Tlingit First Nation's traditional territory stretches from British Columbia into the Yukon down to the Alaskan Coast, where the mouth of the Taku River is located. Although the community members once traveled more frequently through their territory, hunting and gathering, the main location for the community has become the town of Atlin, British Columbia. The town of Atlin was originally a summer camp for the Tlingit people who came to Atlin Lake to fish. The Tlingit name for Atlin is *Wéinaa,* which means alkali or where caribou used to come for salt lick in the Tlingit language (Nyman and Leer,

1993). With a gold rush in 1898, Tlingit people began to share the area with the miners.

The Taku River Tlingit is negotiating their comprehensive land claim within the British Columbia Treaty process, and they have recently signed their framework agreement, which is stage four of a six stage process[9]. The Taku River Tlingit have never given up their title to their land, but the community does have some reserve land that was given to them during the 1915 McKenna-McBride commission. During this commission, representatives of the provincial and federal governments created reserves throughout British Columbia without conducting treaties with Aboriginal peoples (Tennant, 1990; Harris, 2002). Taku Jack was the leader of Taku River at the time, and his testimony to the Royal Commission for Indian Affairs, on June 17th, 1915 records him as saying:

> It is no good for us to have a piece of land all by ourselves [referring to the offer for Reserve land at 5 mile point]. If you give us people a piece of land we are not free. This is my own country and I want to keep it. A whiteman comes to the creek and gets gold out of that creek – after awhile he leaves it and we are sorry to see the whiteman go away. But we are not like that! We stay here all the time because the land is ours. It is no good for us to move out of this place because this is our country. We gave the names to the places around here and these old names came from our forefathers and they are just named the same today. I don't think you believe me when I say I belong to this place! (Jack, 1915).

With this statement, Taku Jack outlined the social identity that the Taku River Tlingit First Nation has put forth to "the other" since that time; their reality is that they "belong to this place". Despite his strong testimony, Taku Jack faced government pressure and in the end pieces of land in the Atlin and Teslin areas

[9] For more information on the BC Treaty Process see: http://www.bctreaty.net/files/sixstages.php

were made into reserves in 1916. These reserves are still in existence today although with the signing of their comprehensive land claim and land planning agreements more land may be designated as under the stewardship of the Taku River Tlingit in the near future.

The community has had a long history, therefore, of welcoming outsiders to their land including: gold miners during the 1898 gold rush, historical and contemporary tourists, and politicians. However, although they are welcoming, they are still very wary of those who wish to take over control of their land. When the Taku River Tlingit First Nation took Redfern Resources to court after the mining company threatened to build a road through Taku River Tlingit territory causing degradation to the land the community fought back. John Ward, Spokesperson for the community during the court case, commented afterwards, "We will never be severed from our land and this decision doesn't change that. Taku River Tlingit Nation will continue to be the stewards of our Territory, like we always have been" (Ward, 2004). In light of court decisions in British Columbia (such as the *Calder* case of 1973, as mentioned before, and the *Delgamuukw* case of 1997) Aboriginal Title has continued to be prominent in community discourse about land and land rights. For example, in 1984 Sylvester Jack, who was Spokesperson for the Taku River Tlingit at the time (and Taku Jack's grandson), put up a sign on their Como Lake reserve welcoming people to the area, and reminding them that they were on Tlingit land (See Figure 6).

Louise Gordon, Sylvester Jack's daughter, describes the motivation behind this sign:

We started doing that because we wanted people to understand that this was Taku River Tlingit Territory. Again, it had to do with my dad; we had to put up signs. He always wanted to put up signs everywhere. That's why he took down all those signs [that white people had put up on "honeymoon island" or Griffith's Island (in English)] and burnt them because he said that if anyone should be putting up signs around here it should be the Taku River Tlingits…he believed that this sign was very significant in not just telling people that this was our territory, but welcoming them also.

Figure Six: Taku River Welcome Sign at Como Lake, BC
Photo by: C. Schreyer, Summer 2005

Wayne Carlick, the designer and painter of the sign, also talked about Sylvester Jack's vision. He said:

> It was his idea to let all of the people who came to Atlin know that this was Taku River Tlingit Territory, and this was early in the land claims process, and Sylvester was really thinking ahead and letting all the developers and miners etc know that if they are going to try to do anything in this area that they will have to deal with TRT. And this is exactly what is happening now, it worked, and TRT has been able to show how strongly they claim this land.

Although the sign is written in English, it is also a performative (cf Austin; Searle; Potter and Sullivan) of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's social identity and a public display of their Aboriginal Title to their land. Darnell has written about the role of language as both a symbol of identity and the means for social action. She has commented that:

> In the absence of political, economic, and personal empowerment, language comes to the forefront of the new traditionalism as a powerful symbol of Native-ness, of the right to reclaim lost skills and ways of life…But language enters the equation in another way which is at least as interesting. That is, language is also discourse, a discourse of social action and political empowerment. It is a discourse in English (1994: 75).

Figure Seven: Taku River Welcome Signs at Como Lake, BC
Photo by: C. Schreyer, Summer 2007

As the Taku River Tlingit First Nation is currently in the process of negotiating their land claim there is a need for them to constantly re-establish their identity as a distinct nation. Sullivan writes that, "assertions of sovereignty…are never

finished; they are mutable and contingent, and they depend on the constant renewal of exercises of power (force and resistance)" (2006: 45).

The re-assertion of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's social identity can be seen in an example from the summer of 2007, when Wayne Carlick painted a new sign which was then placed in front of the old one (see Figure 7). It is still written in English, but incorporates more of the artwork that he has been working to create in the community, such as a canoe with paddling individuals who are wearing cedar bark hats. When I asked him why the new sign had been made, he said "it was a good idea to remind people that they are in Taku River Tlingit territory, but at the same time respect the previous sign" (Carlick, 2007). In regards to the English on the sign he said he thought that the community was moving along a path, especially as more and more of the children are learning the language and for them it will just make sense to use the Tlingit language in more and more ways. Wayne sees the signs as a further extension of the totem poles that were previously used to mark Tlingit land to show occupancy and those poles were never taken down. With art, he says, you can express things without language, such as Tlingit ways of being (Carlick, 2007).

The Taku River Tlingit have also shown their connection to the land through language in their Vision and Management document, "*Hà t_átgi hà khustìyxh* - Our Land is Our Future". In this document it is written, "Land use planning and management shall be grounded in Tlingit concepts, values, and understandings, and should be infused with Tlingit language" (Taku River Tlingit First Nation, 2003:16). Further in the document, under the land plan for the

Management of Heritage and Cultural Values, it is written that the community's goals include:

> - Increas[ing] awareness and use of Tlingit language, culture, and heritage values.
> - Ensur[ing] that Tlingit names are consistently adopted in all documentation for archaeological and traditional use sites, values, and features of geographical areas within TRT territory.
> - Provid[ing] education to Tlingit citizens and others on important places within the traditional territory, the significance of Tlingit place names, and appropriate measures to respect and protect these values.
> - Us[ing] plaques and other forms of communication to educate TRT citizens and others about the cultural importance of special TRT places (where confidentiality is not an issue) (Taku River, 2003: 70).

All of these points illustrate the connection that Tlingit language has to special places and heritage sites within Taku River Tlingit territory, but they also indicate the public nature of the language being used, which is to "increase awareness and use of Tlingit language" as well as to provide "education to Tlingit citizens and others" and "use plaques and other forms of communication" to reach the public. For Warner, a public is "the social space created by the reflexive circulation of discourse" (2002: 90). When the Taku River Tlingit use language publicly they are asserting their power as a community who are distinct from "the other"; and as Warner writes "the projection of a public is a new, creative, and distinctly modern mode of power" (2002: 108).

The phrase "*Ha Tlatgi – Ha Kustiyi* - Our Land, Our Way of Life" has been used in many different ways in the community as a form of public language. Randy Keleher, who works for the Taku River Tlingit Lands and Resources department says:

> It's used in the Government to Government [discussions], I've used it. When I'm referring to the land and vision documents and the

> Conservation Area Design documents, when I'm dealing with the BC government and referrals… On the land use planning documents anyway, because its part of that and it's basically ongoing. It's in our land and vision management and direction document, and we're going off that.

The phrase has also been used more recently on T-shirts that were produced for the lands and resources department of the First Nation.

The phrase has also been used in another sign marking Taku River Tlingit land (see Figure 8). This sign marks *K'iyán* Mountain (meaning "hemlock grows around the bottom" in Tlingit), otherwise known as Jubilee or Minto Mountain. The sign is located on the Atlin road, still within the Yukon Territory. This mountain has special significance for the Wolf Clan[10] (Gordon, L., 2006) and is a marker of Taku River territory to the north. The sign includes both a visual representation of *K'iyán*, as well a linguistic representation with the use of the Tlingit place name.

[10] Tlingit society is divided into matrilineal moieties, which are represented by the animals Wolf and Crow in the Interior Tlingit communities and Eagle and Raven in the coastal Tlingit communities. Moieties can be further divided into clans, K'waans, and Houses. The houses that are found in Atlin include the Crow houses *Kookhittaan* (crow), *Deisheetaan* (split-tail beaver), *Léeneidí* (dog salmon), *Ishkeetaan (*frog), and Wolf house *Yan Yeidí* (wolf).

Figure Eight: *K'iyán* Sign on the Atlin Road
Photo by: C. Schreyer, Summer 2005

The sign was painted by Wayne Carlick, and I asked him about the design of the sign including the choice of language. Wayne described how children had helped him paint the sign, and they were the ones who had picked the words from the constitution that should go on the sign. The elders had told Wayne that as long as there is more Tlingit than English, and that the Tlingit language was written larger than the English that was good because this is Tlingit land (Carlick, 2007). *Ha Tlatgi – Ha Kustiyi* (Our Land, Our Way of Life) has become community-internal rhetoric that is used to further perpetuate the social identity of the Taku River Tlingit, and assert that they have continued to use their land since "time immemorial". It refers not only to land rights, but it also incorporates the Tlingit

language as part of the community's vision for the future. Warner has written about the use of signature catch phrases in popular culture that, "you don't just mechanically repeat signature catchphrases. You perform through them your social placement" (2002: 71), and this can be applied to how the Taku River Tlingit First Nation has begun to use this phrase in the construction of their social identity as well.

Yet another way that the Taku River Tlingit First Nation is establishing their social identity to outsiders is through their presence in the annually printed special visitors' edition of the Atlin Claim (the town newspaper). The 2007 edition included pictures of Tlingit art, the *T'aahku Kwaan* Dancers at the Atlin Arts and Music Festival, as well as a history of the community and a map of Tlingit place names. This map has appeared in the paper each year since 2005 (the first summer I was in Atlin) and is seen by the majority of visitors to Atlin as the Atlin Claim is given out for free at the museum and shops in town. Place names are another way that the Taku River Tlingit have used the Tlingit language to publicly mark the land. The maps that are produced in land use planning also incorporate Tlingit names. Randy Keleher, a GIS Technician in Lands and Resources told me:

> We're trying to incorporate [the Tlingit place names]. I think for the BC government and third parties it would be beneficial if they knew the Tlingit place names and then they'd understand how important an area is to us (Keleher, 2006).

There have also been discussions of applying to change the place names on government maps back to the original Tlingit names or even using a dual naming system, (Jack, 2006) similar to the Australian policy on re-labeling the Aboriginal

landscape (see Amery, 2001). However, this has yet to come into place. Ultimately the use of Tlingit place names in public settings can be summarized by a comment from Nicole Gordon, land use planner for the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. She says:

> Place names let you leave your mark, instead of the English names, and could be used in the BC land plan. In terms of Aboriginal Title, place names prove that we were there, and they are a part of our history. BC says they have a collaborative approach to Aboriginal People, and if TRT uses Tlingit [language and place names], then the BC government should be open to it (Gordon, 2006).

The Taku River Tlingit First Nation has not relinquished Aboriginal Title to their land and in contemporary Canadian society where land claims continue to flourish, their public use of Tlingit language as well as English has marked the land as their own while at the same time helping to create a social identity for the community.

***"Haa shagóon ítxh yaa ntoo.aat"* (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths)**

When I began my work with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, I also volunteered to conduct a project of the community's choosing (just like I did in Loon Lake). I had written a letter to the Council for Yukon First Nations, who passed on my letter to all of the individual First Nations that they represent. Louise Gordon, Lands Director for the Taku River Tlingit, called me the day after she received my letter. She was interested in creating a Tlingit place names board game of the traditional territory of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. Following my analysis of the social construction of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's social identity as connected to the land claims process, I realized that this project was also a reflection of the Taku River Tlingit's identity, just as the Loon River

Cree First Nation's project had been. When I asked Louise why that project was important to her and why she was interested in working on it with me, she replied:

> I was interested in working on that because there is a lot of history around place names, and it is important to teach the younger ones about place names and the reasons why a certain place is called that, like *Áatlein* is big water. A lot of our place names have been changed by the government, and the elders have always said that our Tlingit names need to be on the provincial and federal maps. I must have heard them say it over and over in meetings; we need to have our own Tlingit names on the maps.

This quote illustrates the prevailing aspects of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's social identity which includes a continuation of knowledge through teaching the Tlingit language through place names to the "younger ones", as well as the history behind those names. Although the Loon River Cree's focus was on the children within their community becoming bilingual, this was not the case amongst members of the Taku River Tlingit.

The Tlingit language is considered endangered within the community, as according to community members, there are only two fluent elders left within their community (Gordon, 2007). Children no longer learn Tlingit as their first language, nor do they hear it being spoken in their homes on a daily basis. However, since 2005, Tlingit language programs and curriculum have developed within the community. These include the expansion of the daycare program to an after school language program, the development of Taku River dance groups for both adults and children, as well as signs posted in public areas of the community such as the band office and the culture centre[11]. Within their Vision and

[11] Although, these are posted in public areas, they are not directed to "the other" as the previously discussed signs are. These signs posted in public areas are for the private use of the community

Management documents (as discussed above), Taku River Tlingit community members have written about the importance of retaining their Tlingit language and teaching it to the younger generations within their community (Taku River Tlingit First Nation, 2003). Le Page and Tabouret-Keller have written that "members of a group who feel their cultural and political identity is threatened are likely to make particularly assertive claims about the social importance of maintaining or resurrecting their language" (236). This can be seen in the case of the Taku River Tlingit as they are "ceaselessly engaged" (Sullivan, 2006) in negotiating their identity and maintaining their role as a government worthy of negotiating with.

The Tlingit language board game is entitled "*Haa shagóon ítx yaa ntoo.aat*" (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths); Clayton Carlick, a young man of the community, suggested this name after learning more about how the game was based on knowledge from his elders (Schreyer, fieldnotes, 2006). The game imitates the traditional seasonal round as players travel through the traditional territory (represented by a map) of the Taku River Tlingit and attempt to acquire resources, while at the same time learning the Tlingit words for these resources and the place names where they are located. The game also serves to further develop the community narrative of continuity of the land use as it encourages intergenerational learning because children and adults often play the game together. Louise commented on this aspect of the game when I asked her if it was important for everyone (adults and children) to learn together. She replied:

---

and language learning, rather than public announcement of their territory. This is what Gal refers to as "fractal recursions" (see Gal, 2005).

> I think it's important because in a small community like this there has to be really strong social cohesion, and the Tlingit language right now is bringing the people together, and therefore it is strengthening that social cohesion in the community. People get along a lot better, and it's because of the Tlingit language and culture program.

"*Haa shagóon ítx̲ yaa ntoo.aat*" helps the younger generation learn traditional ecological knowledge about where animals and plants are located within their territory, as well as the names of their locations all in the Tlingit language. "*Haa shagóon ítx̲ yaa ntoo.aat*" perpetuates the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's socially constructed identity that is utilized within their land claims negotiations – that of continuity in land use and knowledge of the land by "traveling their ancestors' paths" through instilling this knowledge in younger generations.

Within the Loon River Cree First Nation's language project, there was concern over the dialect that would be used within the project and taught to the children. This was also the case within the Taku River Tlingit community because there are diverging orthographies for inland and coastal Tlingit. During my first field season in 2005, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation was using the inland Tlingit orthography. Jeff Leer, a linguist, created this orthography when he worked with Mrs. Elizabeth Nyman (a well-respected elder of the community) to write a book of the history of the Taku River Tlingit people (Nyman and Leer, 1993). The inland Tlingit orthography is generally thought to be very difficult to read; and, when I returned to the community in March of 2006, I was informed that the elders council in the community had just signed a resolution saying that all of the language curriculum used in the community must use the coastal orthography, "as this was closer to the true Tlingit" (Taku River, 2006). People in

the community were very excited about this resolution (Dawson, 2006) and since then numerous connections have been forged between language activists and teachers in Alaska as a result. As described within the Loon River Cree example, dialect is an important aspect of identity and using another group's dialect can often serve to undermine a community's own identity, particularly in language curriculum. The use of the coastal orthography then can be seen as strategic in a number of ways. First, the use of the coastal orthography is beneficial for language learning because it is easier for people to read. This was evidenced by a conversation I had with Alice Carlick:

Christine: Do you know why they decided to use the Alaskan Dialect?
Alice: Why? Because the phonics are too hard to read.
Christine: The ones that Jeff Leer did?
Alice: Yes

The process of re-learning a mother tongue is a very sensitive and time-consuming effort, especially in light of the abuses that occurred because of residential schools, and any aspect which can make the language learning easier appears beneficial to the community. As Alice Carlick describes:

> Everyone that's my age had the Tlingit beaten out of them when they were [in Residential School]. For me the beatings started when I was five, and it went on for eleven years. So, now when you try and teach somebody or get somebody interested in Tlingit it gets stuck right in their throats and there's no way that they can remember; it's just been beaten out of you, and you can't learn it back; it's just impossible. So it would be so good if we could get decided what we're going to use and stick with it, and don't change it again.

The use of the coastal orthography is also strategic in that there are so many more resources in the coastal Tlingit orthography. Although the Yukon Native

Language Centre, in association with the Alaskan Native Language Centre has published Tlingit literacy textbooks, dictionaries, and a few storybooks (http://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/ynlc/YNLCinfo/Tlingit.html), they pale in comparison to the numerous Tlingit language curriculum that can be found in Alaska, many of which are produced by Sealaska Heritage Institute.[12]

A second reason for the switch to the coastal writing system is tied to community's social identity. When I asked Louise about the switch to the coastal writing system she said:

> The reason for that was that we, the Taku River Tlingits, migrated from Alaska and Sealaska has a good resource base for the Tlingit language program. Then Mary Anderson [Mrs. Nyman's daughter] started working at Sealaska. She can't read, but she can speak the Tlingit language. Mary Anderson was very instrumental in passing on knowledge to the younger generations in TRT. She was also instrumental in organizing Tlingit curriculum for Sealaska, and she speaks exactly the same way as the Alaskans. Her mother was actually brought up down the Taku, and so was Mary and that's why she can't read or write because she never went to school. So, she had an oral relationship with the Alaskan people, and that's why she spoke the same way, and so did Mrs. Nyman because they were on the river and talked to each other.

Through use of the coastal orthography the community has been able to re-establish connections with clan members from Alaska. These are useful political connections, in the Alaskan corporations, but more importantly clan members are seen as "just like family" (Schreyer, 2006, fieldnotes). These coastal clan members also have knowledge of the land and joint ties to the land, although they were separated with the creation of the international border (Goldschmidt, Haas,

---

[12] This is the Institute run by the Sealaska Native Corporation located in Juheau, and their mission "is to perpetuate and enhance Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian cultures. Language revitalization is a priority of SHI. is the preservation and maintenance of language and culture" (http://www.sealaskaheritage.org/).

and Thornton, 1998). This connection to clan members on the coast reaffirms the connection the Taku River Tlingit have to their entire territory including the mouth of the Taku River, which is located on American soil.

Finally, "*Haa shagóon ítx̲ yaa ntoo.aat*" is similar to the Loon River Cree Language project because the project was run and organized almost entirely out of the Lands and Resources department rather than the education and social development sector of the community, which has education and language as part of its mandate. This is representative of the Canadian-wide shift that occurred in the 1970s, where land was given more prominence in political imaginings than language, and this continues to be true today in local communities and across Canada. Within the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree First Nations, the social identities of the communities are continually re-established, and I will discuss the notion of performatives and their role in negotiating language and identity in the following section.

Performatives of Social Action and Identity

Social identity is constructed through the communication of social facts, but social identity is not just an internal construction, it is brought about through performances or reactions to the outside world. Austin examines the performative nature of language in his book *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). He describes the way that "the issuing of an utterance is the performing of an action" (6). Potter (1996) critiques Austin for not focusing enough on descriptive utterances. He writes that, "Austin was concerned more with how things are

made to happen than with how information is exchanged" (1996: 82). Within his discussions of the way in which rhetoric and discourse are used in social construction, Potter emphasizes the co-constructive nature of discourse as the way in which reality is constructed. Searle also looks at the importance of the *social* nature of language when he examines the way in which institutional facts are constructed. For Searle (1995), an institutional fact is one that "can only exist within human institutions, such as language" (27), and "in institutional facts language is not only descriptive but constitutive of reality" (120) due to the public nature of language.

In her research, Sullivan (2006) elaborates on performatives within Aboriginal communities in Canada due to the power differentials that occur between the communities and the nation-state. Sullivan has written that First Nations[13] communities are constantly engaging in identity construction as a result of the hegemonic constraints of the wider nation-state. In her research Sullivan analyzes flotillas (or protests on boats) and their impact as performatives; according to Sullivan, "assertions of control over territory, including the use of First Nations' languages and songs, are expressions and, more importantly performatives of First Nations sovereignty" (2006: 53). Sullivan draws on Austin (1962) and Butler (1997) and she writes that Butler "suggests that performatives are vehicles for exercises and counter-exercises of power that allow room for recognizing the role of agency…Performatives anticipate…their subject" (2006:53). I would argue that the performatives not only anticipate their subjects,

[13] Although Sullivan was writing specifically about First Nations communities in British Columbia, I believe that this applies to all Aboriginal communities across Canada.

but as Potter has suggested, rely on a social understanding of the action also known as co-construction. Jacoby and Ochs write that:

> One of the important implications for taking the position that everything is co-constructed through interaction is that it follows that there is a distributed responsibility among interlocutors for the creation of sequential coherence, identities, meaning, and events (1994: 177).

Also, the realization of co-construction of identity through community discourse can be analyzed in terms of communicative competence. Dinwoodie writes that "genres that are increasingly being identified as pivotal in the emergence of the modern nation-state, such as autobiography, oratory, and declaration …seem to be particularly salient in attempts to bring about 'Native Voices' " (1998: 214). In Canada, the nation as a whole has acquired some level of competence in the discourse surrounding the land rights of Aboriginal people due to both the media attention and political support that has arisen on this topic. Aboriginal communities across Canada are also utilizing these genres of the nation-state, such as Dinwoodie describes, and this can be seen in the performatives of both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree.

The performatives of sovereignty that the Taku River Tlingit First Nation are utilizing are more public in nature than Loon River Cree First Nation's performatives, and this is partially the result of the type of land claim they are negotiating. Comprehensive claims, which historically take longer to negotiate than specific claims, require the community to prove constant use of the land. The Taku River Tlingit First Nation's identity is still being negotiated as the government continues to negotiate with them. This is in opposition to the Loon River Cree First Nation because the government has already recognized and

accepted the Loon River Cree First Nation's identity and settled their land claim. The Loon River Cree are now in the process of performing their identity and rights to the land for industry and others involved in development. As the community has begun to demand consultation on development within their territory, they have been labeled as a "best practices model" for Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Studies as well as consultation within the province of Alberta (Honda-Mac Neil, 2007). The Loon River Cree, in order to achieve this measure of recognition, has utilized one of the genres of the nation-state that Dinwoodie refers to - the autobiography. Although the community is compiling a Land Use Atlas, it can also be described as an autobiography of the community as a whole because it contains the life histories of twenty elders from within the community and descriptions of their lives in the past and currently. The Loon River Cree have also constructed policies (similar to a constitution) on the mandate of the Consultation Unit (as described in Chapter Three). However, this policy has not been made public in the same way that the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's constitution has – on signs and T-shirts. The Taku River Tlingit First Nation's constitution has also become a declaration of their land title. As Euro-Canadians are becoming more and more accepting of these performatives of nation-hood rooted in land issues the performatives are becoming more frequently "intertwined performatives" between the Aboriginal communities and representatives of the Canada (Sullivan, 2006).

Conclusion

Within this paper I have argued that the land claims process has impacted the socially constructed identities of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Loon River Cree First Nation and that the community discourse that has developed as a result of these identities are performatives of First Nation's sovereignty, which is co-constructed with "the other" or representatives of the federal and provincial governments. I have also argued that due to political history in Canada land rights have developed a much more public role in Aboriginal identities than language rights, but that despite this unequal relationship language maintenance and revitalization strategies have developed out of the rhetoric on land rights for both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree. As a final example of the performative aspects of language in the creation of social identity, I will use an example from the Taku River Tlingit community. I have already described some of the ways in which the Taku River Tlingit use their Tlingit language in public as part of the continuous negotiation of their identity. The Tlingit language was also used at the Atlin Arts and Music Festival in 2007 where the *T'aakhu Kwaan* dancers performed. During festival weekend the small town of Atlin takes in an extra 1000 people (http://www.atlinfestival.ca/index.php?p=Festival_Info5), and so the majority of the audience are outsiders to the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and also to the community of Atlin. In the summer of 2007, the children's dance group *Dikée Aan<u>k</u>áawu Yátx'i* (Children of the Creator) performed at the festival and each of the children introduced themselves in Tlingit during the performance. They

included such aspects of the traditional Tlingit introduction as their names, their clans, where they were from, and then they thanked their audience.[14] Jocelyn Ahlers has described the use of native languages in public venues, and she labels them "Native Language Identity Marker". Ahlers writes that:

> Because speakers performing NLIM are typically non-fluent speakers of their languages, and cannot assume knowledge of their heritage language on the part of audience members, they are not using their language to convey encoded referential meaning but rather solely for the purpose of identity performance and, I argue, for the creation of what could be called a Native discourse space. In many ways the memorized, static use of language at the beginning and end of a speech event serves the same purpose as the walls of a roundhouse, or the wearing of regalia, or the smudging of a room with burning sage: they mark a particular physical space as being in some way distinct from the surrounding physical space. In this case, it is language-as-object that marks out a discourse as distinct from the surrounding speech events (Ahlers, 2006: 71).

I agree with Ahlers that a "native discourse space" is created when native languages are used in public. However, in the example of the children's use of Tlingit here, I do not agree that this can be defined as "memorized and static" language use; rather the use of the Tlingit language in this instance illustrates the manner in which socially constructed identities can build from one generation to the next. The first two girls who came to the microphone to speak were between the ages of 11 and 13, and had had some experience in Tlingit public speaking at various dance performances that the group has been involved in. Evelyn Folbar, who was six years old at the time, was the third girl to speak, and although some of the older children needed to be prompted to speak this was not the case for Evelyn. Her spontaneity indicates that speaking Tlingit in this public forum is natural to her; in fact when she arrives at the microphone to state her name and

[14] Some of the children, who had had less experience in the Tlingit language, only stated their names in Tlingit or said *Gunalchéesh* (Thank you).

clan it is evident that she is speaking spontaneously because she forgets some words and has to pause and ask the girls behind her (who spoke first) what the words are (Schreyer, field videos, 2007).[15]

Evelyn is the daughter of Nicole Gordon, a land planner for the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, and one of the people I interviewed for my research. During the interview, I had asked Nicole about her experiences learning Tlingit. She replied that even though she is still learning herself, she can imagine Evelyn calling to her own grandchildren and talking to them in Tlingit. Nicole believes that as long as people want to learn the language it will be around (Gordon, 2006). Evelyn's use of Tlingit spontaneously and publicly is a result of the social construction of identity that has occurred within the Taku River Tlingit community and that is built upon strong connections to the land. From as early as 1915, if not earlier, Taku Jack began to put forth the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's position on land issues to the outside world. Taku Jack was still fluent in Tlingit however, and so the language ideology portion of his identity was markedly different from community members today as it was the following generations who were sent to Residential School, and who consequently lost their Tlingit language skills including: Antonia Jack (Taku Jack's daughter)[16] , Sylvester Jack (his grandson), and Louise Gordon (his great-grand daughter).

---

[15] As the girls are not expecting her questions, their use of Tlingit becomes spontaneous as well.
[16] For more information on Antonia Jack see: Schreyer, Christine and L. Gordon. (2007) Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres: Un projet de revitalization linguistique par le jeu. (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths: Fun and Games in Language Revitalization.) *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 31(1), 143-162.

Three generations of one family were sent to Residential School, as well as many other families within the Taku River community, but the community continued to assert their rights to the land. Louise described how, despite the fact that her father (Sylvester Jack) did not speak Tlingit he still knew how to respect the land. She told me, "He didn't really speak Tlingit that well, but he understood Tlingit, and the spiritual part of the language and culture, its connection to the land, he totally understood" (Gordon, 2006). It was these leaders of previous generations, such as Sylvester Jack that paved the way for new Tlingit speakers such as Evelyn Folbar (Taku Jack's great-great-great-grand-daughter). Wayne Carlick's description of the *K'iyán* sign also illustrates this because the elders of the community allowed the children to choose English words for the sign as long as the sentiment of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's connection to the land was evident. In this way, through stressing the importance of land, the elders have helped to create the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's current social identity so that one day land and language may return as parallel pillars of political strength within the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the Loon River Cree First Nation, and other Aboriginal communities across Canada.

References Cited

Aboriginal Language Task Force Report (2005) *Towards a New Beginning: A Foundational Report for a Strategy to Revitalize First Nations, Inuit and Métis Languages and Cultures.* Report to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, June 2005.

Ahlers, Jocelyn C. (2006) Framing Discourse: Creating Community Through Native Language Use. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology.* 16(1): 58-75.

Amery, R. (2001) Language planning and language revival. *Current Issues Language Planning* 2 (2, 3):141-221.

Austin, J.L (1962) *How To Do Things With Words.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Basso, Keith H. (1996) *Wisdom Sits in Places: landscape and language among the Western Apache.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckman (1996) *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday

Brody, Hugh (2000) *The Other Side of Eden: Hunters, Farmers, and the Shaping of the World.* Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, Ltd.

Brody, Hugh (1988) *Maps and Dreams: Indians and the British Columbia Frontier.* Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, Ltd.

Butler, Judith (1997) *Excitable Speech: A Politics of Performance.* New York: Routledge.

Cassidy, Frank (1992) *Claims in Canada: A Regional Perspective.* Coates, Ken (ed.) Copp Clark Pitman, Ltd: Toronto. Pp. 10-43.

Chafe, Wallace (2003) On the "Rhetorics" of Linguists. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 13(2): 234-238.

Collignon, Béatrice (2006) *Knowing Places: The Inuinnait, Landscapes, and the Environment.* Edmonton: Canadian Circumpolar Institute Press.

Cruikshank, Julie (1981) Legend and Landscape: Convergence of Oral and Scientific Traditions in the Yukon Territory. *Arctic Anthropology* XVIII (2), 67-91.

Cruikshank, Julie (1990) Getting the Words Right: Perspectives on Naming and Places in Athapaskan Oral History, in *Arctic Archaeology* 27(1), 52-65.

Cruikshank, Julie (1997) Negotiating with Narrative: Establishing Cultural Identity at the Yukon International Storytelling Festival. *American Anthropologist* 99(1):56-69.

Darnell, Regna (1994) Private Discourse, Public Discourse, and Algonquian Oral Tradition Proceedings of the twenty-fifth Algonquian Conference. Ottawa: Carleton University Press

Darnell, Regna (2002) The Quebecois and the Amerindiens in the debate on Canadian Identity. In *Proceedings of the Thirty-Third Algonquian Conference*. Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press.

Darnell, Regna (2005) Linguistic Anthropology in Canada: Some Personal Reflections. *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* 50 (1/2/3/4): 151-172.

Davis, Richard (2007) Notes from presentation on the Loon River Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, May 22nd, 2007.

Dinwoodie, David (1998) Authorizing Voices: Going Public in an Indigenous Language. *Cultural Anthropology* 13(2): 193-223.

England, Nora (2002) Commentary: Further Rhetorical Concerns. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 12(2): 141-143.

Federal Government of Canada, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (1991) The Matter of the Constitution of the Loon River Cree Band in the Province of Alberta", Ministerial Order, December 4th, 1991

Fentress, James and Chris Wickham (1992) *Social Memory: New Perspectives on the Past*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Foster, Michael (1981) Canada's First Languages. Language and Society. Languages of Canada Series, 1. Ottawa: Government of Canada, Commissioner of Official Languages.

Fumoleau, René (2004) *As long as this land shall last: a history of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11, 1870-1939* Calgary: University of Calgary Press

Gal, Susan (2005) Language Ideologies Compared: Metaphors of Public/Private. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*. 15 (1): 23-37.

Goddard, John (1991) *Last Stand of the Lubicon Cree*. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre

Goldschmidt, Walter, Theodore, Haas, and Thomas Thornton (1997) *Haa Aaní - Our Land: Tlingit and Haida Land Rights and Use*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Gordon, Nicole (2007) Tlingit Language and Culture. Guest Lecture in the Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology. University of Alberta, March 26th, 2007. Edmonton, Alberta.

Harris, Cole (2002) *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance and Reserves in British Columbia.* UBC Press: Vancouver, BC

Haugen, Einar (1966) Dialect, Language, Nation. *American Anthropologist* 68 (4): 922-935.

Hill, Jane (2002) "Expert Rhetorics" in Advocacy for endangered languages: Who is Listening, and what do they hear? *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 12(2): 119-33.

Hinton, Leanne. (2002) Commentary: Internal and External Language Advocacy. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 12(2): 150-156.

Honda-McNeil, Jamie (2007) Alberta's Traditional Land Use Study Initiative. Paper presented at the 4th Interjurisdictional Symposium on Aboriginal Involvement in Resource Management, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. September 12th, 2007.

Jack, Taku (1915) Testimony for the McKenna-McBride Commission, Atlin, BC. June 17th, 1915.

Jacoby, Sally and Elinor, Och (1995) Co-Construction: An Introduction. *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 28 (3): 171-183.

Jull, Peter (2001) Nations With Whom We Are Connected: Indigenous People and Canada's Political System. Australian Indigenous Law Reporter 6(2):1-15 and 6(3):1-16.

Le Page, R.B and A. Tabouret-Keller (1985) *Acts of Identity: Creole-based approaches to language and ethnicity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Loon River Cree First Nation (In Production) *Eskopihk ekwa Anohch, Then and Now: A Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study by the Loon River Cree First Nation.* Eva Whitehead, Laverne Letendre, Richard Davis, Barry Hochstein, and Christine Schreyer (eds.)

Loon River Cree First Nation (2006) *Loon River First Nation Consultation Unit: Consultation Policies and Procedures.*

Mansell, R. L. (1970) A Socio-Economic Study of Isolated Communities in Northern Alberta, Report for Human Resources Development Authority, Government of Alberta, Research and Planning Division, V. T. Janssen, Head. Edmonton, July 1970

Martin-Hill, Dawn (2008) *The Lubicon Lake Nation: Indigenous Knowledge and Power.* University of Toronto Press: Toronto.

McDougall, Allan and Lisa, Philips Valentine (2001) Competing Histories: Land Claims in Southwestern Ontario, Canada. Paper presented at the Politics and Arts Group Conference in Tampere, Finland, September 13-15th, 2001.

McNab, David T. (1992) Aboriginal Land Claims in Ontario. *Aboriginal Land Claims in Canada: A Regional Perspective.* Coates, Ken (ed.) Copp Clark Pitman, Ltd: Toronto, pp. 73- 99.

Menzies, Charles (1994) Stories from Home: First Nations, Land Claims, and Euro-Canadians. *American Ethnologist* 21 (4): 776-791.

Morris, Alexander (1991) *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories.* Winnipeg: Fifth House Publishers

Morantz, Toby (1992) Aboriginal Land Claims in Canada. Coates, Ken (ed.), *Aboriginal Land Claims in Canada: A Regional* Perspective, (pp. 101-130) Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, Ltd.

Nadasdy, Paul (2001) "Property" and Aboriginal Land Claims in the Canadian Sub Arctic: Some Theoretical Considerations. American Anthropologist 104(1): 247-261.

Nyman, Elizabeth and Jeff, Leer (1993) *Gagiwdul.at: Brought Forth to Reconfirm: The Legacy of a Taku River Tlingit Clan.* Yukon Native Language Centre: Whitehorse and Alaska Native Language Center: Fairbanks.

Ochs, Elinor (1994) Constructing Social Identity: A Language Socialization Perspective. *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 26(3): 287-306.

Potter, Jonathan (1996) *Representing Reality: Discourse, Rhetoric, and Social Construction.* London: Sage Publications.

Reddekopp, Neil (1998) Origin and History of the Cree Communities of Little Buffalo and Loon Lake, Alberta. Alberta Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, Indian Land Claims Branch, Revised 1998.

Rosaldo, Renato (1980) *Illongot Headhunting, 1883-1974.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Royal Proclamation of Britain (1763) In Referencing Indian Country. London, England

Saul, John Ralston (1997) *Reflections of a Siamese Twin: Canada at the End of the 20th Century.* Toronto:Viking.

Sawchuk, Patricia and Jarvis Grey (1980) The Isolated Communities of Northern Alberta, Métis and the Land: Report of the Land Claims Section (Edmonton: Métis Association of Alberta, 1980)

Schreyer, Christine (2006) Unpublished field notes. Atlin, British Columbia. May 29th to July 12th, 2006.

Schreyer, Christine. (2007) Unpublished field notes. Loon Lake, Alberta. February 20th until February 24th, 2007.

Schreyer, Christine (2008) "*Nehiyawewin Askihk*" – Cree Language on the Land: Language Planning through Consultation in the Loon River Cree First Nation. *Current Issues in Language Planning: Language Planning and Minority Languages*. 9(4):440-463.

Schreyer, Christine and L. Gordon. (2007) Parcourir les sentiers de nos ancêtres: Un projet de revitalisation linguistique par le jeu. (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths: Fun and Games in Language Revitalization.) *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 31 (1): 143-162.

Searle, John R. (1995). *The Construction of Social Reality*. New York: The Free Press.

Shaw, Patricia (2001) Language and Identity, Language and Land. *BC Studies* 131, Autumn.

Slattery, Brian (1987) Understanding Aboriginal Rights. *Canadian Bar Review* 66: 727-783.

Sullivan, Kathleen M. (2006) (Re)Landscaping Sovereignty in British Columbia, Canada. *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*. 29(1): 44-65.

Taku River Tlingit First Nation (2003) *Our Land is Our Future - Hà t_átgi hà khustìyxh*. Vision and Management Document for the Taku River Tlingit First Nation Lands and Resources Department. Atlin, British Columbia

Taku River Tlingit First Nation (2006) Elder's Council Resolution. January, 2006, Atlin, British Columbia.

Tennant, Paul (1990) *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics: The Indian Land Question in British Columbia 1849-1989*. UBC Press: Vancouver, BC

Thornton, Thomas (2008) *Being and Place Amongst the Tlingit*. University of Washington Press: Seattle in association with Sealaska Heritage Institute: Juneau.

Thornton, Thomas (2003) Place Names and the Language of Subsistence in Southeast Alaska. In J Blythe and R. McKenna Brown (eds.), *Maintaining the Links: Language, Identity, and the Land, Proceedings of the seventh conference presented by the Foundation for Endangered Languages* (pp. 29-35). Bath, UK: The Foundation for Endangered Languages.

Ward, John (2004) Internet consultation from Accessed March, 2005: (http://www.titleandrightsalliance.org/TlingitStatement_2004-11-18.htm

Warner, Michael (2000) *Publics and Counterpublics*. New York: Zone Books.

Westman, C. (2008) *Understanding Cree Religious Discourse*. Unpublished PhD Manuscript. Department of Anthropology, University of Alberta. Edmonton, Alberta.

Woolard, Kathryn, and Bambi Schieffelin (1994) Language Ideology. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 23: 55-82.

Court Cases References

Delgamuukw v. British Columbia, [1997] 3 S.C.R. 1113.

Calder et al. v. Attorney-General of British Columbia, [1973] S.C.R. 313

Websites Used:

Atlin Arts and Music Festival: http://www.atlinfestival.ca/index.php?p=Festival_Info5

Comprehensive Claims (Modern Treaties in Canada): http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/info/trty_e.html

Dene Nation Website: http://www.denenation.com/denedec.html

Frequently Asked Questions about Specific Land Claims in Canada: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ps/clm/asc_e.html

New Parks North: http://www.newparksnorth.org/aboriginal_landclaims.htm

Terminology Guidelines from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/wf/index_e.html

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Volumes 1-5: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/rpt/wrd_e.html)

Yukon Native Language Centre:
http://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/ynlc/YNLCinfo/Tlingit.html

List of Interviews

Carlick, Alice (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, British Columbia, July 11th, 2006

Carlick, Wayne (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, British Columbia, July 9th, 2007.

Dawson, Lorraine (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, British Columbia. July 5th, 2006

Gordon, Louise (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, British Columbia, June 26th, 2006.

Gordon, Nicole (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, British Columbia, September, 2006.

Jack, Sandra (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, BC, September 8th, 2006.

Keleher, Randy (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, British Columbia, September 11th, 2006.

Noskey, Arthur (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. February 23rd, 2007 at Loon Lake, Alberta.

Noskey, Jerry (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. May 23rd, 2007 at Red Earth Creek, Alberta.

Ward, Kenny (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. September 6th, 2007. Loon Lake, Alberta.

Chapter Five: Directness and Indirectness - Local Language Planning amongst the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree

Introduction

A thread that I have interwoven throughout this dissertation is the highly intricate relationship between land and language within Aboriginal communities in Canada. Using ethnographic data from the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Loon River Cree First Nation, I have argued that active participation in land rights negotiations has led each of these two communities to view their language as a resource that is part of their land and this has consequently had impacts on their language revitalization and maintenance strategies. Although the Aboriginal Languages Task Force has incorporated land and language within their national language planning strategy, they have not expanded on this relationship in the way that the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree have done within their communities. Language planning for these communities is incorporated into their land planning.

The Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Loon River Cree First Nation have each developed social identities based on their historic connection to their lands and one way that they have utilized their languages is through "performatives of sovereignty" (Sullivan, 2006: 53). This trend does not appear to be isolated in Canada, as Meakins (2008) has also illustrated the relationship between negotiating for land rights and language maintenance in her research with the Gurindji of Australia. This community maintained their Gurindji identity through active participation in negotiating land rights with the Australian government, which led to a unique linguistic

environment where Gurindji Kriol (a mixed Indigenous and English language) developed and further solidified their identity as Gurindji people.

Within the Aboriginal Languages Task Force report (2005), First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities' concerns have been, for the most part, blended together in an attempt to create a national strategy for all of the Aboriginal languages of Canada. However, as I have discussed in Chapter Four, local communities have distinct social identities as a result of their unique social histories, and it is difficult to find a one-size-fits-all strategy for the diverse Aboriginal languages across Canada. The national strategy in this report does not take into account differences in communication styles between First Nations, or, for that matter, differences in Inuit or Métis communication styles. In their book entitled *Native North American Interaction Patterns*, Darnell and Foster (1988) write that the compiled articles originated out of a conference whose goal was to substantiate the belief that "there were some common interactional elements in native North American cultures that contrasted with the interactional style of white society" (1988:vi). Not only are there differences in the interaction patterns between Native Americans and white society, there are also differences in the interaction patterns *between* Aboriginal cultures. Previous research on Cree and Tlingit language use has shown that each culture has specific conversation interaction patterns. I argue that these differences have also had an impact on each community's local language planning in conjunction with their relationship to the land and their social identity.

Within this chapter, I will summarize Cree patterns of indirectness and the impacts that these have had on status and corpus planning within the Loon

River Cree community. I will also address the tendency for Tlingit speakers to be direct in their speech interactions and speak their minds, particularly Tlingit women, and will describe how this directness has also impacted status and corpus planning within the Taku River Tlingit community. It is important to note that concepts of directness and indirectness are culturally specifc (just as notions of property are culturally specific) and are not bounded entities, but rather are more likley represented as points on a continuum of directness. Finally, I will also address acquisition planning in terms of the different domains of use that each community has created for their languages. The domains of use that the communities have created are tied to the land, and therefore, I will argue that they are also tied to the social identity of each community and their relationship to the land.

Now, Then, and Cree Indirectness in Communication

Anohch ekwa Ekospîhk or "Now and Then" is the phrase that the Loon River Cree First Nation has chosen as the title of their Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Atlas. As I described in Chapter Four, this phrase also descibes the social identity of the Loon River Cree First Nation who based the settlement of their land claim on their historical identities in order to assert control over current development on their lands. The use of the phrase Now and Then also illustrates some of the characteristics that scholars have deemed to be dominant in Cree interaction styles. In particlar, this phrase emphasizes the respect Cree speakers hold for the elders in their community who have gained knowledge through their life experiences. In Darnell's discussion of *Cree Narrative Peformance* (1974), she outlines her 1971 visit to the family home of her co-Cree instructor, Mary Louise, in Wabasca, Alberta (just south

of Loon Lake). She wanted to hear stories about "what it was like in the old days" (1974:315) from Mary Louise's father. Darnell describes how "[their] host did not feel that he was the best person in the community to tell these [stories], and preferred that [they] meet an old man who was nearly a hundred years old and knew much more about traditional Cree ways" (1974: 316). Within the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Atlas, as well as the storybooks that I have helped to create with the community, the elders' words are the focus of the books. A collection of Cree stories (1998) entitled *Kôhkominawak Otâcimowiniwâwa (Our Grandmothers' Lives As Told in Their Own Words)*, edited by Freda Ahenakew and H.C Wolfart, also illustrate the importance of elders' life experiences in sharing their knowledge. As I have previously described, in Loon Lake there is concern that the current Cree curriculum in use in the school is not culturally relevant and, therefore, is uninteresting to the children. This concern led Mayble Noskey and Richard Davis to decide that information from the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study would be appropriate for inclusion in the Cree language curriculum as it would include information about the childrens' *kôkams'* (grandmothers') and *môsams'* (grandfathers') lives.

I also encountered the indirect tendency of Cree conversation patterns when I attempted to conduct interviews with community members in Loon Lake. I found that people were often reticent about participating and instead would suggest other community members who they thought would have more knowledge on the topic than themselves. In 1991, Darnell drawing on her extensive experience working in Cree communities, described thirty-nine postulates of Cree conversation and wrote that these were "normative,

reflecting the way people ought to behave, ideally" (1991: 90). Many of these postulates outline the indirectness that is involved in Cree communication patterns. These include, but are not limited to:

> ...3) Under many conditions, the most respectful speech is silence...
> 4) The personal autonomy of living beings precludes attempts to interfere with or control their behaviour or opinions...
> 5) Respect for autonomous persons precludes direct contradiction...
> 6) Deniable strategies, often non-verbal, are preferable to confrontational talk...
> 7) It is respectful to avoid eye contact...
> 11) Initiative to structure the progress of an interaction is dangerous and to be avoided whenever possible...
> 13) Questions should be phrased indirectly...
> 14) The ideal speech is a monologue....
> 28) In storytelling or narrative, say as little as possible...
> 33) Teaching is deliberately cryptic
> 37) Use of the future tense jeopardizes ongoing processes in the world of power... (Darnell, 1991: 91-100).

As I described in Chapter Three, the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study led to the creation of the Consultation Unit in the Loon River Cree community. The Consultation Unit's role is to deal with development proposals from industry and government within Loon River Cree territory, but it also has the responsibility of "protect[ing] the *culture, language* and lifestyle of the LRFN community and membership" (LRCFN Consultation Unit, Policies and Procedures, 2006, emphasis added). As mentioned previously (see Chapter Three), the Consultation Unit also works to "assist LRFN member trappers with *awareness and understanding* of resource development activities affecting their registered fur management area" (LRCFN Consultation Unit, Policies and Procedures, 2006, emphasis added). But, in the policies and procedures for the Loon River Cree First Nation's Consultation Unit, no explicit plan exists for how they will protect the Cree language or assist trappers with awareness and understanding. In contrast, the

Taku River Tlingit First Nation has detailed statements about how language will be included in their land planning. For example, the Vision and Management documents state, "Land use planning and management shall be grounded in Tlingit concepts, values and understandings, and should be infused with Tlingit language" (TRTFN, 2003: 16). As well, under the section on Culture and Heritage, the Vision and Management Document makes the statement that, "There should be Tlingit language and cultural programs *out on the land* for adults and children to help keep the language and culture alive" (TRTFN, 2003: 32-33, emphasis added). The Taku River Tlingit First Nation are much more direct in their land policies and plans about how they will include language in their land planning, but in the case of the Loon River Cree First Nation's Consultation Unit policies and procedures the actual plans are left out. This again illustrates the differences in communication styles in planning (land and language) between the two communities. Also, as can be seen from the examples of indirection Darnell provides, the pattern of a back and forth interview is not a natural part of Cree conversation; however, interviews played an important role in the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy study at Loon Lake. In order to be taken seriously Aboriginal communities have been forced to use the language of the Euro-Canadian law makers in order to gain control over their lands and maintain their stewardship of their resources (Nadasdy, 2003). This has had an impact on the type of language that has been collected from the Loon River Cree First Nation's Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study and, consequently, has also impacted the style of communication in the study.

In my interview with Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study team member Kenny Ward, I asked him if he ever found it hard to talk to the elders during the interviews or if there were any problems. I asked this question because I was interested in how elders' use of Cree (also known as "high" Cree) might be different from younger community members' Cree and cause misunderstandings, which was something Arthur Noskey alluded to in my interview with him (Noskey, 2006). Kenny's answer focused on the pattern of communication rather than the actual language used; he replied, "At first it was a bit awkward. You ask something or you don't want to cut somebody off or trying to steer them in the right direction, but that would be all. Other than that it was really good" (Ward, 2006). The style of an interview contradicts many of the thirty-nine postulates of Cree conversation that Darnell has listed, but she does state that the postulates are for ideal conditions. Some of the elders were very brief in their answers, yet many of them adapted to the questionnaire style of conversation and the transcripts of their interviews read more like a monologue than a back and forth interview. The question remains, then, what is the effect of the indirect nature of traditional Cree conversation patterns on contemporary language planning?

As I have described elsewhere, the idea to create storybooks for the community school developed from conversations between Mayble Noskey (Education Councilor) and Richard Davis (Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Manager) and myself. When I arrived in the community, I was given access to the transcripts from the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study to get an overall impression of the information included in the interviews in order that I could write outlines for the types of books we

could make. Although the interviews had been almost completely conducted in Cree, the transcripts were translated and transcribed simultaneously in English. This was for a variety of reasons; first, the community wanted to compile the information into a database that could be used to provide information on land use patterns when government or industry wanted to conduct development in their community (Davis, 2007). For example, if a company wanted to build a pipeline in their traditional territory the database would enable them to locate any important cultural sites near the pipeline and pass this information along to the company as potential reason for further study or to reject the development altogether. As I have mentioned in Chapter Three, very few if any of the government and industry representatives that I saw in the community spoke Cree. The second reason for transcribing the interviews in English was because the community wanted to publish a Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Atlas and they felt it would have a wider audience if it was published in English rather than Cree[1](Davis, personal communication, 2007). Finally, the interviews were transcribed in English because the community members did not often write Cree and did not have an "official" (community recognized) standard writing system. As I have described in Chapter Three, the community has begun to address this issue via language planning through the mandate of the Consultation Unit. Originally Mayble and Richard did not see the English transcriptions as a problem for the creation of the storybooks, although this changed when they realized how much time and money would be involved in re-translating the books.

[1] The community has decided to use Cree words and phrases within the document, although the majority of the text is written in English.

After my initial reading of the interviews I approached members of the community, including Mayble, Richard, and Dawa (the Cree Language teacher at the Loon Lake school), with two choices for potential storybooks. The first option focused on the life history of individual elders and the second option focused on themes, such as moose hunting or trapping, with each book incorporating quotes from a multitude of elders. The consensus was that the second option would be more useful for classroom learning and I began compiling quotes from the interviews based on eight approved themes. These themes were: 1) Moose Hunting and Use, 2) Housing, 3) Pow-wows, 4) Fishing, 5) Collecting Berries, Herbs and Medicines, 6) Trails, 7) Ways People Travel, 8) Trapping.

Once I had pulled quotes from the interviews on each of the topics, I arranged them in the books and chose one quote on each topic to be used as the title of the books. These were:

1) *Ka kiyakîkway nikîkakwemicinan oma môswa kanipahith*
(We used to use everything that we can get out of the moose for food)
2) *Kinwes ayisiyiniwak kîatihayawak mako sipik piyisk kîatiwâsgahigan nikiwak*
(That is when people stayed for a long time at Loon Prairie, and eventually everyone made houses).
3) *Nikiskeyihten mâna ekî wîhkohtohk ôta Mâkwa Sâgahiganihk*
(I know there used to be pow-wows here at Loon Lake)
4) *Kayâs kîmihcetôwak kinosewak Mâkwa Sâgahiganihk nân'taw isîsi ekî esi pîhtokwetwâw*
(Long ago there used to be fish that would come into Loon Lake)
5) *Poko kîkway iki ohpikik, poketek, môka, mâna ayisiyiniwak kakî oshetatow maskihkiwâpoy kâyas, iki mekitow shteamowa, meskotch*
(Anything grew just anywhere, but when people made herbal tea long ago, they would have to give some tobacco as an offering).
6) Kâyas mâna sâgahigansa peyakwan meskanawa iki itapatakaw shônek sîpîhk
(Long ago the little lakes were used just like roads along the river banks)
7) *Kîkatawasisin kâyas sakâhk, pokîte kakî itohtân tîpiyâhk nwayask kita tahkopitaman kitâpachitâwina. Kakîpapâmitîhtapin.*

(It was beautiful in the woods a long time ago, and you could go anywhere as long as you tied your belongings right, and you could ride around).

8) *Eko onôcihcikew, tâpwe onôcihcikew ekî peyakot asci. Mistahi ekî ayât yahkiskâkewin ekwa sôhkemôwin - eko awa Joe Noskey.*
(He was a trapper, a real trapper, and he was alone too. He had a lot of motivation and courage – that was Joe Noskey)

As I have described in Chapter One, the entire set of eight books was entitled *Na mokatch nika poni âchimon* (I will never quit telling stories). After I had compiled the text of the books, I wrote notes on potential pictures that would be included with the text. The Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study team had collected many pictures from site visits and personal archives and Richard agreed that some of these pictures could be used in the books. As described in Chapter Four, I also was able to include pictures that I took from the moose-hide tanning that occurred within the community when I was there in the fall of 2006.

Translation, in the end, became one of the biggest problems for the storybooks. The transcribed interviews had already been translated from Cree to English and then, due to the fact that the original recordings had not all been time-indexed, they had to be re-translated back into Cree. This was an exceptionally large challenge, and I would not recommend it for any other community language project, but, as is often the case in "on-the-ground" language work, the choice became one of stopping the project entirely or working with what we had. Therefore, after I had compiled all of the English quotes for the books, two community members (Mayble Noskey, Education Councilor and Kenny Ward, Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Team member) re-translated these English quotes back into Cree. There are obvious challenges that occur with any translation process, particularly from a

native language to English. One example is the lack of equivalency for concepts in the native language which may not have word for word translations in English. In terms of the story books this was also a challenge due to the fact that the quotes were from many different elders' interviews and it was next to impossible to find the audio version of the quote in order to hear the elders' exact words. Therefore, Mayble and Kenny were forced to use the written English and translate these words back into Cree. Another challenge to the re-translation of the storybooks is that speakers in the community tend to spell Cree words based on English phonetic principles (as discussed in Chapter Three). Mayble and Kenny each used different English spellings for the words that they translated. They also sometimes incorporated Cree spellings which they knew from other experiences.[2] Once Kenny and Mayble had completed their Cree translations, I was able to go through and standardize the spellings in the storybooks with the help of Billy Joe Laboucan, a fluent Cree speaker who works as a government consultant on educational issues in the Treaty 8 area.[3]

The storybooks were also demanding due to the fact that the re-translation process took extra time and money from the Lands and Resources department expanding the timeframe for completing this project significantly. It should also be noted however, that the unfortunate circumstances of Mrs. Jack's death in Atlin, set a deadline for the completion of the board game, which we did not experience in Loon Lake. Finally, the last issue we faced in compiling the storybooks was locating pictures from the Traditional Land Use

[2] This was especially true for Mayble, who had taken Cree language classes at the University of Alberta and who tended to incorporate more of the academically recognized spellings of Plains Cree in her translations than Kenny did.

[3] I have described the process of creating a community orthography in Loon River in Chapter Three and Chapter Four, and so do not feel it is necessary to describe it again.

and Occupancy Study, which has an extremely large picture database and it was difficult to find pictures to match the quotes in the storybooks. Also, the photos were located on the main computer for the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, and I could only access them when I was in the community and a team member was not using the computer for other purposes. It was important to both Mayble and Richard that the storybooks include photos from actual places and activities in Loon River (just as in the Taku River board game). Currently, a graphic designer (Mythographics of Edmonton, who also created the Taku River board game) is compiling review copies of the storybooks that include the standardized text and all of the photos that we have to date. Following the completion of these copies, there will be a community review of the storybooks and, after any corrections are made and more pictures are added, a set of the books will be printed for the school and for the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study office.

Although the storybooks are one of the first efforts of the Loon River Cree Consultation Unit to protect their language and culture and implement language planning in their community there are implicit problems with the books, and some of these are related to the indirect tendency of Cree interaction patterns. First, as this information was collected via interviews, an non-traditional teaching method, it is likely that the types of information collected are different that what is usually part of teaching stories. Loon River Cree community members did, however, conduct all aspects of their Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study themselves, and the information that was collected can be argued (see Chapter Three) to be more complete than if an outsider had conducted the interviews. However, as I have

mentioned, due to the fact that the interviews were subsequently translated and transcribed into English, aspects of the information provided in the interviews may have been lost due to the change of context and different referencing expressions in each language. An example of this can be seen in the title of the storybook on berries, medicines, and herbs which is translated in English as "Anything grew just anywhere, but when people made herbal tea long ago, they would have to give some tobacco as an offering". In the English translation of this sentence, the context for "anything" and "anywhere" is missing causing the story to perhaps appear more indirect that it was likely intended. Phyllis Morrow describes a similar situation from her research with Yupik elders who were interviewed in their own language about memorial ceremonies. In this case she states that as the interviews were conducted in the elders' own language this "allowed us [herself and Elsie Mather, her Yupik collaborator] to eliminate the influences of insider/outsider frame when analyzing communication processes" (Morrow, 1990: 144). In this case, the interviews were first transcribed into Yupik and then English transcriptions were provided, but this did not occur in the Loon River Cree case, and therefore, some of the indirect references the elders' might have been embedding in their speech may have been lost or confused in translation.

Another problem with the information in the storybooks is that it was not collected with the intention of using it as language curriculum or even as teaching material. As Darnell outlines above (1991), Cree teaching stories are often "deliberately cryptic" and include "as little as possible" and are ideally in monologue form and lessons are learnt repeatedly through exposure to stories, and this again can be a significant issue in translation to English, a

language which often requires more specificity than Cree. The information collected in the storybooks does not allow for this traditional form of learning and communication to occur. Also, as I have argued throughout this dissertation, in Loon Lake language planning is based out of the Lands and Resources sector of the community. This has impacts on the funding that is available for use as funding agencies may not understand the relationship between the land planning and language planning. Within the Aboriginal Language Task Force Report, dispersion of funds was seen as a major issue of contention. For example, one participant stated:

> When various bands are putting out project proposals for grants, one gets funding and 14 others get none. We have to stop competing for which language is the most worthy of being saved – which one gets saved…We're all worthy of being saved (2005:65).

Funds are so tight across Canada for Aboriginal Languages that many projects fail to ever reach completion and an attitude of anything is better than nothing can prevail in communities. This situation occurred in Loon Lake when cost saving measures led Mayble and Richard to choose re-translation of the English quotes rather than the time-consuming process of finding the audio versions of the Cree quotes. It should be noted here though that land planning consistently receives more funding than language planning in both communities and it is up to the communities to decide if funds designated to the Lands and Resources department will be used for language initiatives, which is what Mayble and Richard chose to do for the re-translation of the storybooks.

In order to critically assess the storybook project in Loon Lake, I need to address the two roles that I had while in the community – academic and volunteer. As a linguistic anthropologist, my academic knowledge tells me

that due to the manner in which these storybooks were compiled they are not ideal representations of Cree language in-use. The language in the storybooks was not recorded with the intent of using it as language teaching material, and they have been artificially compiled into themes. Also with any translation, information is lost, and these books have been translated twice and out of the contexts in which they were originally recorded. However, academically, the storybooks can be seen as important due to the fact that they have incorporated material that is relevant to the community. As a volunteer, I was able to attend Cree classes in the school and see that the language curriculum they were teaching was not relevant to the students, such as the story based on the fictional character (*peariskwesis – pear girl)*. The storybooks on the other hand include real-life events such as stories about their ancestors and pictures of their families. In Chapter Four, I also described how the creation of a community recognized orthography allowed the community to incorporate their social identity into the language curriculum and separate themselves from their southern neighbours. The storybooks, then, are important because they are one of the communities' first language-related projects, and can provide insight into language ideologies of the community through analysis of the choices the community made on how to proceed with the books (such as I have provided).

As a volunteer on a community initiated and led project, it was not my place to decide that the storybooks may be limited in value to the community, and this is related to two factors. First, as a volunteer, I agreed to conduct a project with the community as a means of gaining access to the community and creating a reciprocal relationship with them. The American

Anthropological Association has included the notion of reciprocity in their professional ethical standards, when they state that anthropologists should seek "active consultation with the goal of establishing a working relationship that is beneficial to all parties involved" (AAA website, 2008, Section IIIA, point 6). Secondly, through my time in the community, I began to more fully understand the Cree style of indirect communication, and although I suggested alternatives on how to tackle the translation of the storybooks, I left the choice to those individuals whom I believed knew more about what was best for the community – Mayble and Richard. In terms of language planning, the storybooks have contributed to both status and corpus planning within the community and have further expanded the relationship between language and land.

As the crow flies, the clans speak – Directness in Tlingit communication

Tlingit society (as described previously) is a matrilineal society, and clans play an important role in many forms of communication including personal names, stories, and songs. Within her book *Gágiwdul.àt: Brought Forth to Reconfirm – The Legacy of a Taku River Tlingit Clan*, Mrs. Elizabeth Nyman tells only stories from her own *Yan Yedí* (Wolf) Clan (Nyman and Leer, 1993). Cruikshank also addresses the role of clan in her work with Angela Sidney, a Tlingit-Tagish woman from Southern Yukon, and Mrs. Sidney's inability to sing a song from an opposing clan until that clan has given it to her as a gift (1998). Women were also important trading partners and this can be seen in the intriguing story of the Kohklux Map. Kohklux was a Chilkat Tlingit, who, in 1867, drew a map of his trading territory for American Scientist George Davidson. Davidson published the map in 1901,

but the original disappeared soon after was not found until 1984. The history of the map recounts the following on the importance of Tlingit women in trading relationships:

> a man counted on his wife's judegment in trading and she had an equal voice in the partnership. There are numerous accounts of deals with Chilkat men falling through because their wives did not approve. Women also had a role in planning trading expeditions and their advice and opinions were never ignored. So, it was that Kohklux had assistance from his wives in drawing the map (Yukon Historical and Museums Association, 1995: 10).

The importance of women's role in Tlingit society was also seen in 1946, when the American government hired Walter Goldschmidt (an anthropologist) and Theodore Haas (a lawyer) to conduct interviews with Alaskan Tlingit in order to settle the land question in Southeastern Alaska. Within his remembrances of the trip, Goldschmidt writes that, "whenever we came to a new village, the first question Joe [their Tlingit translator] had to answer was: 'Who is your mother?' This is so Tlingit! And so unlike the first question we Anglos usually ask: 'What do you do?' (Goldschmidt and Haas, 2000: xxv).

Cruikshank, in her article entitled *Negotiating Narrative – Establishing Cultural Identity at the Yukon International Storytelling Festival,* describes, Taku River Tlingit elder, Mrs. Nyman's performance at the 1994 Yukon International Storytelling Festival and compares it to a second address Mrs. Nyman made at a Tlingit elders' gathering at Brooks Brook, south of Whitehorse two weeks later. In relating the *Yan Yedí* (Wolf Clan) history of the Taku River at the Festival, Cruikshank states that Mrs. Nyman gave:

> only the slightest hint that what she was saying might be contested by others, [and] she continued: The new generation think we want to claim T'aahku, but we don't! We just want people to respect it, like the old generation. It's not that I want to take Taku River and pack it around! As she spoke that day, she conveyed the impression of a quiet, gracious elder patiently recounting uncontroversial history as a way of

> publicly restating her clan's connection to place (Cruikshank, 1997: 62).

Directness, as mentioned earlier, is a continuum, and many factors, including particpants in a speech act, will aid in determining how direct an individual is at a particular time. In the above description, Cruikshank leaves us with the impression that Mrs. Nyman's performance here is strategic in order to still share her opinions, but ignore any controversy. This is in comparison to her performance at Brooks Brook, for an all Tlingit audience, where Mrs. Nyman "began by acknowledging that she faced challenges about her right to prepare her book. 'People say I wrote that book because I want to make a name for myself. That's not true. I did it so I could tell them our history'" (Cruikshank, 1997: 62). In this all Tlingit situation, Mrs. Nyman is even more forthright and direct with her opinions.

In my work with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the importance of women in society and the direct nature of their interaction patterns quickly became evident. For example, more Tlingit women than men agreed to conduct an interview with me during my fieldwork and the women were very outspoken about their beliefs on Tlingit language and the land. For instance, Alice Carlick had very decided opinons about the role of bureaucracy and how changing place names to English has affected Tlingit people. She stated:

> Place names say what's on the land and why that land is important to us. They are very, very important because in many areas the bureaucrats have taken over. For example, if you are growing a garden it would be like having people decide what kind of fertilizer you use on your potatoes, what kind of design is going to go on the bag, how much the potato is going to cost, how much the transportation is going to cost, and all this. The person that decides all that never even planted a potato, never felt a potato leaf, never, ever felt the earth, and doesn't even know what this fertilizer is doing to our climate. To me the bureaucracy is blind, totally blind. Something as

> simple as planting a potato they can't understand because they are way up there on cloud X, and they have no idea what ties that potato to us or to the land; they don't know the importance of it! (Carlick, 2006)

Another example comes from Nicole Gordon who, as I have described in Chapter Four, stated that if the Taku River Tlingit uses the Tlingit language in their negotiations with the provincial government then the provincial government should be open to it and respect the community's decision (Gordon, 2006).

One last example of the strength of Tlingit women as well as the directness of Tlingit communication can be seen in the program from Celebration 2006 – "Reflections of Our Ancestors in the Faces of our Children". Celebration, as has been previously mentioned, is Sealaska Heritage Institute's biannual cultural celebration, which focuses on dance performances, language workshops, and art shows, as well as other cultural events. In reading the 2006 program, I found jokes inside which stereotyped Tlingit women as very outspoken and powerful[4]. At first I was unsure what to make of these jokes, but all of the Tlingit women I knew found them immensely funny. This again illustrates the importance of directness as a quality that is important for the Taku River Tlingit speech community, and this undoubtedly has had an impact on how the community has used Tlingit language in the public domain and in their language planning.

Both Cree and Tlingit cultures share aspects of their interaction patterns, such as respect for elders and storytelling as a means of teaching

[4] One joke involved a Tsimshian, a Haida, and a Tlingit woman undergoing testing to see who would qualify as the first Native American Women Special Assignment Assassin, which the Tlingit woman won. The second joke involved a Yupik, an Athapaskan, and a Tlingit woman telling the Great Spirit what their beliefs were when they were alive. The Tlingit woman goes last and tells the Great Spirit without hesitation, "I believe you are sitting in my chair!" (Sealaska Heritage Institute, 2006).

younger generations, but differences occur between the two communities due to the indirectness and directness that each community holds as part of their ideal communication strategies. An aspect of status planning in Taku River Tlingit territory that is related to their directness is the use of signs to mark their land. As I described in Chapter Four, the social identity the Taku River Tlingit have developed is the result of their need to be ceaselessly engaged as part of their negotiations for control over their traditional territory. As part of their performatives of sovereignty, they have placed signs around their territory welcoming visitors to their land and asking them to proceed with respect. In this chapter, I also consider that placing signs on their land is not only related to claiming land rights, but is also related to the direct nature of Tlingit communication patterns.

The Taku River Tlingit First Nation use signs on their land in two different ways. The first way signs are used is when they are directed to outsiders. These signs can be seen as directives, another type of speech act defined by Seale (1979), which entails "the use of language in an attempt to get hearers to do something" (Rushforth, 1988: 123). Signs that fall under this category include the *K'iyán* sign, the welcome signs at Como Lake (both described in Chapter Four), and signs that are placed throughout Taku River Tlingit territory marking graves and sacred sites (Keleher, 2006). All of the signs attempt to have the hearer's acknowledge that they are on Tlingit land, and the *K'iyán* sign explicitly states "We welcome you to our territory and request that you proceed with respect." Although these signs are polite and welcoming, I would argue that, similar to Mrs. Nyman's performance for a wider audience at the Storytelling Festival, these signs are strategic and also

assert the directness of Tlingit speaking patterns and enable the community to claim the land as their own. Tlingit street signs are also found on the town reserve and on the Five-Mile reserve. Some of the signs are directional signs that post the Tlingit words for stop and yield. These signs can also be seen as public, direct use of language because they also let outsiders know they are on Tlingit land, particularly on the town reserve, which is located next to a RV park and has many tourists visit it throughout the summer.

The direction signs are also part of the second set of signs, those directed to Taku River community members, because they also help community members learn new Tlingit words. Street signs on the reserves incorporate traditional Tlingit place names from the Taku River area. These names were specifically picked as they remind community members of the land that is most important to them (Jack, 2006), and again help community members to learn Tlingit place names. Daveluy and Ferguson describe the use of street signs in Nunavik, Quebec as urban place names (In Press: 23; see also Romaine, 2002) and this can be seen in the Taku River Tlingit First Nation case as well[5]. As described elsewhere, within the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the Tlingit language is considered endangered. In Atlin, no child learns Tlingit as their first language, but the community has increased their desire to revitalize their language and their cultural practices in recent years and signs are used in public places that are directed to learners of the Tlingit language. Some of the signs that are posted in the band offices, health centre, and culture centre include: posters that list the Tlingit numbers from one to ten,

[5] Currently, the street signs list the English name and then the Tlingit name. During my interview with Nicole Gordon, she stated that the words were in the wrong order and that the Tlingit should come first. There are also concerns about the signs as the names are spelled in the Inland Tlingit writing system, which the community no longer uses.

as well as name of plant names, words associated with sewing regalia, signs in the bathroom that label them in Tlingit (men and women), and signs in the kitchen for various utensils. The Tlingit Family Learning Centre has phrases for many things including: "see you again", "thank you", names of animals, and commands on their walls. The Lands and Resources office has a button blanket that hangs on their wall and uses Tlingit words, and also incorporates Tlingit place names in their maps that cover the band office walls. The dance groups are named in Tlingit – *T'aakhu Kwaan* and *Dikée Aanḵáawu Yátx'i*, and the new Social and Health Programs building was looking for a Tlingit name for its grand opening in the fall of 2008.[6]

These signs that are posted to raise awareness of the Tlingit language can also be seen as part of the corpus planning of the community as well. The signs help new speakers learn how to read the Tlingit language as they are posted in the coastal orthography, which is the orthography the Taku River Tlingit elders have decided is the only orthography that the community will use.[7] In fact, their choice of orthography is another way in which Tlingit directness is evident in the community's language planning. When the elders decided to change from the inland Tlingit orthography (developed by Jeff Leer) to the coastal orthography they stated that their reason was that this was closer to the "true Tlingit" (TRTFN, 2006). As I described in Chapter Four, there are numerous reasons why the community believes this statement, and this is connected to the community's social identity that has developed through their land rights negotiations. However, the switch from the inland Tlingit orthography to the coastal orthography caused quite a stir within the

[6] At the time of writing, the name had not been chosen.
[7] The street signs are posted in the Inland Tlingit orthography, as I noted earlier, and it has been decided that it is cost prohibitive to change them at this time.

Canadian Tlingit community, where the inland writing system has been in use since the publication of Mrs. Nyman's book in 1993. Recently, the Carcross-Tagish First Nation has also decided to switch to the coastal writing system (Kirby, personal communication, 2008), and only Teslin Tlingit First Nation and the Yukon Native Language Centre continue to use the inland orthography.[8] Directness, then, can indeed be seen to play a role in both the status and corpus planning within the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. In the following section I will address differences in acquisition planning and its relationship to the social identity of each the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Loon River Cree First Nation.

Domains of Use – Reconnecting Language and Land

In Tlingit conception, the land is their home; and learners of Tlingit often feel more comfortable on the land and speak more Tlingit when they are participating in activities that are associated with the land, such as hunting, fishing or berry picking. Louise Gordon, Sandra Jack, and Lorraine Dawson all spoke about the importance of being out on the land for language learning in their interviews with me (Gordon, 2006; Jack, 2006; Dawson, 2006), and I have also seen this from personal experiences out on the land during a hunting trip, at the warm springs, and also during culture camps as well where adults as well as children spoke more Tlingit on these occasions than when I saw them in town or on the reserve. Alice Carlick, in our interview, stated that "if you get to know your map [and the Tlingit place names] then you get to know your land" (Carlick, 2006). Richard Davis has also commented on the

[8] The fact that two of the three Canadian Tlingit communities have switched might force the Yukon Native Language Centre to change as well, but that remains to be seen.

connection that the Cree of Treaty 8 feel to the land. He states, "For thousands of years First Nation people traveled this land. Our history is written in every river, lake and living part of creation" (Davis, 2003:2). Within the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study team members often took the elders they were interviewing out on the land. This allowed the elders to remember more details about events that had taken place there, and the team members were able to record the exact location of important locations so that they can be referenced during consultation with industry and government. For both communities, then, the land is a safe place where they feel comfortable speaking their languages, and where the languages can, especially in the case of the Taku River Tlingit, be re-learnt. The differences in status of the Tlingit and Cree language, has also created differences in domains of use for each of the communities, and this in turn is connected to acquisition planning for each community. I will describe the differences in domains of use for the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree below.

Within Taku River Tlingit community, their land is the most important domain of use for their language. This relationship to knowing the land and learning the Tlingit language can be seen in their language ideology. Tlingit language is a resource that is part of the land, and what better place to acquire that resource than out on the land. For example, I had the privilege of going moose hunting in September 2006 with community members from Taku River Tlingit community. Afterwards, I commented to Nicole Gordon that it seemed like she was using more Tlingit with her daughter when she was out on the land. She said that she felt more comfortable out there and that her daughter responds more in Tlingit when she also feels comfortable (Gordon,

interview, 2006). In Chapter Four, I describe how the game *"Haa shagóon itx yaa ntoo.aat"* focuses on place names and learning about the land. It is an important language-learning tool because it imitates being out on the land, collecting resources and learning the names of the places where those resources are located. It is also significant that this game was developed and played at culture camps and outside of the classroom (as described in Chapter Two). Sandra Jack in her interview outlined the relationship the community has to the land. She stated:

> We're viewed as being territorial because we're Tlingit and this is our territory and we're defending it and we're asserting our title to it. You could put our place names on a map but that won't mean anything to them [non-Tlingit]. It's almost like trying to tell them about a belief that we have about our spirituality, and I think that language is also very spiritual in its own way. So, [the non-Tlingit] would end up missing the mark and they wouldn't understand (Jack, 2006).

The importance of place names can also be seen in the name of the community itself. As Alice Carlick remembers, "We used to be called Atlin Indian Band, and a lot of us didn't like it because we are matrilineal and we come from the Taku River" (Carlick, 2006).

The Taku River was the focus of the court case against Redfern Resources, and has been the main source of the community's fight for recognition of their land rights at a larger international scale (see Chapter One). This notion of taking care of the land as part of community identity that is also based in language can be found in other locations as well. Meakins (2008), in her description of the creation of Gurindji Kriol in Australia, states that "…the fight for the right to custody of their traditional lands occurred in parallel to changing linguistic practices" (Meakins, 2008: 86). In Gurindji country, stories of the Dreaming or the creation of the world are a part of the

community's oral traditions. According to Meakins, Dreaming creatures made a number of tracks across Gurindji country and "the maintenance of these lines and their associated sites is essential for the physical and spiritual well-being of the Gurindji people" (2008: 76). Meakins goes on to describe how "the Dreaming creatures sang the land into being, and the stories of the Dreaming are recounted in sounds which also act to help maintain the land" (2008:77). The Taku River is also an important site for physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being for the Taku River Tlingit community members and legends also exist about the creation of the landscape in that area.

One place name that holds particular importance is *T'aakhu Téixh'i* – the Heart of the Taku, which is an island that sits in the river of that name. Mrs. Nyman recorded in her book *Gágiwdul.àt: Brought Forth to Reconfirm - The Legacy of a Taku River Tlingit Clan*, the story entitled "The Battle of the Giants". She recorded this story in 1988 in the Tlingit language, in her book with Jeff Leer (Nyman and Leer, 1993), and it describes the mythohistoric battle that two giants (Was'as'ê and Łkùdasêts'k)[9] engage in over the Taku River. Eventually, Was'as'ê rips Łkùdasêts'k apart and throws pieces of his body all over the Taku. He declares, "Let Łkùdasêts'k's heart become the Heart of the Taku" (Nyman and Leer, 1993:5), and to this day that heart remains in the Taku River.

Since I began working with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation in February of 2005, I have never heard this story told; I have only read Mrs. Nyman's version. This is not to say that community members do not know the story and the significance of T'aakhu Téixh'i. In an interview that I

[9] The Tlingit words seen here are spelled in Inland Tlingit Orthography, as this is how they appear in the Nyman and Leer text (1993).

conducted with Louise Gordon, she describes the Heart of the Taku as being a place that is of special importance to her and the community as a whole. She says:

> Down the Taku there's an island and it's kind of shaped like a heart and they call it "The Heart of the Taku", and [the elders] believe that if that Island goes away or if someday it will erode then the Taku will not be the same. [Knowledge] like that is probably most important to us (Gordon, June 2006b).

This knowledge is part of the reason, why the Taku River Tlingit First Nation has worked so hard to protect their land. The metaphor of "The Heart of the Taku" reappears again in a booklet that was co-written by the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, and BC Wild (a conservation group) in support of their court case. This booklet, printed in 1997, is entitled, "Taku: Will a short-lived mining project sever the *bloodline* of the Tlingit people?" (1997: cover). Within the text of this booklet, a clearer explanation arises for what "the bloodline' is to the Taku people. Taku River Tlingit First Nation fisheries manager at the time, Cecil Anderson, "describes the Taku's *salmon* as the Tlingit's bloodline" (1997: 8). The Taku River Tlingit First Nation currently, have what is known as "food fish" or the community fishing by Taku River Tlingit community members for the rest of the community living in Atlin. Projected numbers for food fish each year are 3,000 sockeye, 1,500 coho, and 1,500 chinook (1997:9).

The fish is distributed throughout the community by the fisheries department. I have been in the community when the fish is distributed, and it is always an exciting time. People try to get their favorite type of fish; families join together to share and process the fish, which always arrives whole. The fish is filleted, and special parts are laid aside: the head, the fins, and tails.

The salmon are a healthy source of food, but there is also a spiritual or emotional connection to food that comes from the land. Even in the Taku River Tlingit's constitution (1993), it is written, "It is the land from which we come that connects all life. Our land is our *lifeblood*" (as quoted in TRTFN, 2003, emphasis added).

Terry Jack, a Taku fisherman, has said in the Lands and Resources Vision and Management Document - *Hà t_àtgi hà khustiyxh* (Our Land, Our Way of Life), his feelings on the salmon that feeds the community:

> The fish to our people is one of our lifelines. And not only that it's so sacred to our people. It's a food that represents us as Tlingits…when I think of Taku fish, I think of it as coming from the *Heart* of the Tlingit country (TRTFN, 2003: 60, emphasis added).

As well, in the past two years, some of the fish from the Taku fishermen's harvest has been given to the community's dance group the *T'aahku Kwan* Dancers, in order that they can put on a Salmon Barbecue and raise funds to travel to Juneau, Alaska and participate in Sealaska Heritage Institute's Celebration. I volunteered at the dance group's barbecue at the Atlin Arts and Music Festival in 2006 and 2007. In 2007, Wayne Carlick, the community's dance leader, also developed a skit for the children's dancers at the Atlin Arts and Music Festival that illustrated the ceremony of the first salmon caught each year down river. To respect the salmon, after the salmon is eaten, the bones are placed back in the water to replenish the salmon for future generations. Salmon, the bloodline of the Taku people, is therefore, also helping to feed the spiritual and cultural well-being of the Taku River Tlingit people, as well as their physical well-being.

Vernon Williams, another Taku fisherman, states in the Vision and Management document, "Protecting our culture is knowing where the Heart of

the Taku is, that's the heart of our culture" (TRTFN, 2003: 15). During an interview that I conducted with Sandra Jack, the current Spokesperson or leader of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, I asked her if she ever has the time to make it to the Taku. Sandra replied:

> I haven't [been lately] no, but I've been down to the Taku. I did a fishing season when I was down there. It was really good because I ended up commercial fishing, and it was just a beautiful time. A lot of people talk about how it changes your life …or it really helps you to heal up more so you can get through the rest of the year, and do reasonably well, and take care of the other part of your life. For myself, I ended up going down there knowing that it was a special place, but not knowing really what to expect. I'd never commercial fished, you know, I'd never been out on the river…. I think what was really important though, what I walked away with was just that experience of being down the Taku, and there were a lot of people that were down there at the time, I think there might have been twenty Tlingits that were all commercial fishing. So, it was something new that we were all trying, not that we knew exactly what we were doing, we just knew that we'd done it before. I mean it's got to be in our blood (laughing). So, we ended up getting down there and just getting out and enjoying the land, and enjoying the work. (Jack, September 2006).

As can be seen in this comment from Sandra, the land is seen as a place where one can learn and therefore, it should come as no surprise that it is the land that has become one of the most important "domains of use" for the Tlingit language within Taku River Tlingit territory, and which is the focus of their acquisition planning.

In contrast, Cree is still actively spoken by the majority of Loon River community and it is very common to hear Cree throughout the Loon Lake reserve. It is spoken in the band office, in local government meetings, in the health centre, and on the roads. English is heard when people are speaking to outsiders on the phone or if visitors from industry or the government arrive in the community. Also, in some cases more English was spoken in my presence

than Cree because although community members knew I had learnt Cree at universities they also knew that my comprehension level would be at a much lower rate than if we spoke in English. This was not always the case though and some examples of completely Cree conversations I heard were during the moose hide tanning that I attended in the community in the fall of 2006, during an elders' review of the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study Atlas in the spring of 2007, and during the site-visit I took with members of the Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study team in 2006.

In Chapter Four, I described how the Loon River Cree community saw settlement of their land claim as a necessary step in obtaining some say in the development that occurs on their land. The land claim also contributed to the creation of new jobs in the community and the construction of a new, locally run school (see Chapter Four). Prior to the land claim, community members often had to work outside of the community and spoke English at their jobs. The settlement of the land claim created new jobs in the community where community members could continue to use their Cree language in a daily setting. Also, the creation of a community run school allowed the community to start Cree classes as part of their curriculum, and created a new domain of use for the Cree language at Loon Lake.

However, within the school English is the more dominant language because the majority of the teachers do not speak Cree and come from outside the community, and the Cree language classroom has become its own separate domain of use. For example, the local Cree teachers in the school all tend to congregate in the Cree classroom during breaks (Schreyer, 2006, fieldnotes). Although the school has become the focus of acquisition planning in Loon

River, this has caused some concern for members of the community because their children are no longer hearing Cree all day every day. There is also the perception that the Loon River Cree children need to learn English as well so that they will succeed in life, but there is concern that the language will be lost in the home. Chief Arthur Noskey, despite his concerns on the status of Cree in the homes of his community stated, "I know some of the homes, basically, the conversation is all in Cree, some Cree-English mix" (Noskey, 2006). In Chapter Three, I stated that the Loon River Cree First Nation was in a state of stable bilingualism and that, as more and more English was spoken in their territory, they would need to locate more domains of use for the Cree language. Westman has recently documented the church as a domain of use within the local Cree communities (2008), and the Consultation Unit has begun to implement written Cree usage in their office and at the school. The settlement of their land claim has provided opportunities for Cree to continue to be used daily at Loon Lake, which will continue through the efforts of the Consultation Unit.

Acquisition Planning – Local Versus National Language Planning

The domains of use that both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree have created for their communities can be seen to be addressing acquisition planning for their communities. They are creating spaces where language will be learnt and/or continued to be used. Acquisition planning returns to two concepts that I discussed in Chapter Two – need and relevance. In this chapter I quoted Morrow, who stated that "one learns a language in order to talk with people; one talks with people because there are important things to hear and to say" (Morrow, 1987: 141). Each community has

different needs for their language, and this has played out within the differences in their social identities based on their connection to the land.

The Aboriginal Languages Task Force also addresses acquisition planning in their national strategy for language renewal and maintenance, and here, again, the national strategy diverges from the local realities of communities such as the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree. The national strategy focuses on the use of languages in schools and suggests that funds be provided for training teachers and students. Although the report makes use of statistics on mother tongue languages (or those learnt in the home), the strategy is not addressed to improving language use within the home, but rather focuses on other domains of use. These include schools, correctional facilities, and native gathering centres in urban areas. Although the national strategy stresses the connection that Aboriginal languages have to the land, they do not take this into account within their acquisition planning, perhaps because as they are attempting to be an overarching national policy these are the venues where the national policy might have the most influence. Sealaska Heritage Institute, on the other hand, has implemented immersion programs for the languages they teach, including Tlingit. Mitchell, in his article entitled *Tlingit Language Immersion Retreats: Creating New Language Habitat for the Twenty-First Century*, outlines the pros and cons of four different immersion camps that Sealaska Heritage Institute has funded (2006). Mitchell describes the importance of (re)-creating a habitat for the Tlingit language. He states:

> …just as with endangered biological species, it is more often the direct destruction of habitat that leads to language endangerment. If endangered languages are to survive, there must be social settings in which these languages are the most appropriate for use in authentic

> communication. This *habitat reclamation* would ideally involve entire communities (villages, towns, cities, or regions) where the endangered language would again be useful — literally full of uses — on a daily basis (Mitchell, 2006:187-188).

The Taku River Tlingit see the land as their language classroom, and the curriculum they have created thus far, including the "*Haa shagóon itx̲ yaa ntoo.aat"* game and the school curriculum (TRTFN, 2006), takes the land into consideration. Through the settlement of their specific land claim, the Loon River Cree have created a linguistic enclave for their language on their reserve. They have been able to return to their status as an "isolated community" for linguistic purposes in order that they can teach Cree at school and provide more and more domains of use for the language to be spoken in the face of increasing pressure from development and the English that comes along with the development.

Concluding Remarks

Throughout the course of my research I have worked in two very divergent landscapes; from rocky, snow capped mountains to dense, prairie muskeg, and I have come to see how desire for stewardship over these lands has led each of the communities I have worked with to develop social identities that reflect their desire for control over the resources that are a part of that land, including language. I have used the knowledge I have gained from conducting fieldwork with the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree in order to compare the local rhetoric of language planning within their communities to the national strategies proposed by the Aboriginal Language Task Force. Both national and local strategies stress the importance of the relationship between land and language, but the Aboriginal Languages Task

Force does not take their strategies to the same level that the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree have done within their communities and in their traditional territories. Within the introduction to this dissertation, I discussed Donna Patrick's arguments on the importance of considering the micro-level of language use. To reiterate, she states that in order to fully understand language planning at the community level researchers need to find connections between the social, historical, political, economic, and cultural context of local language use, and that to accomplish this will require:

> …more detailed ethnographic investigation of everyday language use – in particular, the way that language varieties are linked to social and cultural practices, local economic activities, and assertions of local power. One place to start on a practical level is to work in collaboration with Indigenous groups and organizations to see what 'bottom-up' initiatives work in particular contexts and which of these initiatives can be fruitfully applied to others (Patrick, 2005: 385).

My research has provided examples of bottom-up language planning and everyday language use through the collaborative, community initiated and community driven projects that I have participated in with both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree.

The projects that I have worked on have been beneficial for me so that I could gain access to the communities on their own terms and develop a reciprocal relationship. Due to my involvement in the volunteer projects, I was also permitted to use particular information (usually related to land use) in order to incorporate it in the projects I was working on. As Maiter et al write (2008):

> Reciprocity is not only necessary to accomplish research in an ethical manner, but it is also illuminating, since the process of negotiating priorities and learning what study participants expect to obtain from cooperating with researchers reveals valuable cultural knowledge (Maiter et al, 2008: 308).

This has proven to be true because, as I discussed in Chapter Four, both the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree chose volunteer projects that further represented the social identities they had negotiated as part of their relationship to the land and, therefore, the land claims process. The information that I learnt while preparing both the board game and the storybooks enabled me to frame questions during my research that would not have occurred to me otherwise.

Applied anthropology has been defined by Rylko-Bauer et al (2006) as "anthropology in use", and I think that has been one of the greatest benefits of my volunteering – the projects I have worked on have been of use to the community members. In reflecting on my volunteer projects, I have come to make connections between my research and the methods of Participatory Action Research (PAR). Despite the fact that my research question originally came from my own interests in the relationship between land and language, my project changed and developed as a result of the interactions I had via my volunteer projects. Action research, as defined by Reason and Bradbury (2001), is:

> A participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowledge in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview... It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities (2001: 1).

Both the game and the storybooks that I helped create were practical solutions for an issue of pressing concern in each of the communities, and can be used as models for communities across Canada in terms the revitalization and

maintenance of their native languages.[10] Brydon-Miller et al describe some of the characteristics of action research as concerning "real outcomes with real people", "building trust" and "long term projects"(2003). In my research, I started the volunteer projects as a means to get to know the community and build relationships formed on trust. As well, it is these projects that continue to draw me back to the communities, despite the fact that I have completed my doctoral fieldwork, and I feel that I have made long-lasting connections with both the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Loon River Cree First Nation.

For example, in June of 2008, I traveled to Juneau, Alaska to attend Sealaska's bi-annual Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian Celebration. I had attended as part of my fieldwork in 2006 with the *T'aahku Kwaan* dancers and went with the dancers again in 2008. My goal in attending Celebration this year was to share *"Haa shagoon itx̲ yaa ntòo.aat"* (the board game I created with the Taku River Tlingit) with Tlingit speakers from Alaska and other Tlingit language teachers, researchers, and activists, and I was very successful in this goal. Roby Littlefield, a well-known Tlingit language teacher and activist from Sitka, Alaska was very enthusiastic about the game and, as a result of her enthusiasm, she played it in the main lobby of Centennial Hall (where the majority of dance performances occur) at least five times over the course of three days. Many individuals, including children, teenagers, parents, and elders stopped to play with us or watch us as we played. Enthusiasm for the game carried on as the Taku River Tlingit dancers and I traveled home,

[10] In fact, I have been in consultation with the Ta'an Kwach'an First Nation, located in Whitehorse, Yukon about the process of creating a board game for their community based on Southern Tutchone place names and traveling through the land.

and we played it numerous times on the ferry from Juneau to Skagway (so many times that I lost count!).

In May of 2008, I had also submitted an application to the Endangered Language Fund in order to receive funds to print more copies of the game. Although I had previously applied to this fund with Louise Gordon in 2006 for funding for development of the game, we were unsuccessful in acquiring funds to develop the game. Following my return from Juneau, I received an email from the Endangered Language Fund stating that I had again been unsuccessful with my application. The email also contained comments from two anonymous reviewers in order that I could improve my application in the future. The first reviewer was supportive of the application stating that it was an "exciting addition to the language learning tools", while the second was unsupportive. They wrote that there was "no demonstrated documentation of actual language acquisition from the board game"[11] and that it was an "unrealistic expenditure for a limited population" (Whalen, 2008, personal communication). Taku River Tlingit community members, as I have described throughout this dissertation, have supported and helped to create the *"Haa shagoon itx yaa ntoo.aat"* board game and see it as an effective learning tool. The second anonymous reviewer appears to not consider the ability of this game to be used in other Tlingit language communities or as a model of other endangered language communities in general and this comment does not appear to be following Patrick's model for more "work in collaboration with Indigenous groups and organizations to see what 'bottom-up' initiatives work in particular contexts' and be fruitfully applied to others" (Patrick, 2005: 385).

[11] It is important to note that the ongoing effectiveness of the game over a longer period of time is still unknown and to follow-up studies will be necessary to document this over time.

Not only has my research contributed to language curriculum for each of the First Nations I have worked with, but it has also shown the strong relationship that language curriculum projects and language planning has to land planning in these communities. My hypothesis that this relationship is particularly strong in these Aboriginal communities, who have participated in active negotiations for their lands (see also Meakins, 2008), will require more research on the relationship between land planning and language planning in other Aboriginal communities in Canada. The Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree, as well as all other Aboriginal communities involved in land claims negotiations, are involved in a "ceaseless engagement" (Sullivan, 2006), and as such the language they use can be seen as a "performative of their sovereignty" and an assertion of their "local power" (Patrick, 2005).

My research has shown that language planning can not stand on its own – separated from the historical, political, economic, social and cultural considerations that a community faces. Local issues, such as the numerous factors that influence a community when creating or choosing a new orthography, must also be taken into consideration and this is one of the reasons why an effective national Aboriginal language planning strategy has yet to come to fruition in Canada. As the Aboriginal Languages Task Force illustrates, all Aboriginal communities in Canada have significant ties to their lands. My research demonstrates that the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree see their languages as resources that are a part of their land. If this language ideology is seen to be found in other Aboriginal communities across Canada it is imperative that any future national language planning strategies take stewardship over lands into consideration. Following these local

examples from the Taku River Tlingit and the Loon River Cree, national language planning strategies need to consider the land as a renewed domain-of-use for Aboriginal languages and as a new *habitat* for language maintenance and revitalization.

References Cited

Aboriginal Language Task Force Report (2005) *Towards a New Beginning: A Foundational Report for a Strategy to Revitalize First Nations, Inuit and Métis Languages and Cultures.* Report to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, June 2005.

Ahenakew, Freda and H.C. Wolfart (1998) *Kôhkominawak Otâcimowiniwâwa – Our Grandmothers' Lives as Told in Their own Words.* Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center.

Brydon-Miller, Mary and Davydd Greenwood, and Patricia Macguire (2003) Why Action Research? *Action Research* 1(1):9-28.

Cruikshank, Julie (1997) Negotiating with Narrative: Establishing Cultural Identity at the Yukon International Storytelling Festival. *American Anthropologist* 99(1): 56-69.

Cruiskshank, Julie (1998) The Social Life of Stories: Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Darnell, Regna (1974) Correlates of Cree narrative performance. In *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking.* Richard Bauman and Joel Sherzer, eds. Pp. 315-336. London: Cambridge University Press.

Darnell, Regna (1991) Thirty-Nine Postulates of Plains Cree Conversation, "Power," and Interaction: A Culture-Specific Model. In *Papers of the Twenty-Second Algonquian Conference.* W. Cowan (ed). Ottawa: Carelton University Press.

Darnell, Regna and Michael Foster (eds.) (1988) *Native North American Interaction Patterns.* Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Daveluy, Michelle and Jenanne, Ferguson (2009) Scripted Urbanity in Canada's North. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 19(1): 78-100

Davis, Julie (2007) Rethinking the architecture: An action researcher's resolution to writing and presenting their thesis. *Action Research* 5(2): 181-198.

Davis, Richard. (2003) What is a Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study? Unpublished document.

Davis, Richard. (2007) Notes from presentation on the LRCFN Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Study, May 22nd, 2007.

Goldschmidt, Walter and Theodore, Haas (2000) *Haa Aani – Our Land: Tlingit and Haida Land Rights and Use.* T. Thornton (ed.). Seattle: University of Washington Press with Juneau: Sealaska Heritage Foundation.

Loon River Cree First Nation. (2006) *Loon River First Nation Consultation Unit: Consultation Policies and Procedures.*

Maiter, Sarah, Laura Simich, Nora Jacobson and Julie Wise (2008) Reciprocity: An ethic for community-based participatory action research. *Action Research* 6(3): 305-325.

Meakins, Felicity (2008) Land, language, and identity: The socio-political origins of Gurindji Kriol. In *Social Lives in Languages – Sociolinguistics and Multilingual Speech Communities*. M. Meyerhoff and N. Nagy (eds.). John Benjamin Publishing Company. Pp. 69-94.

Mitchell, D. Roy (2005) Tlingit Language Immersion Retreats: Creating New Language Habitat for the Twenty-First Century. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 172: 187-195.

Morrow, Phyllis, (1987) *Making the Best of Two Worlds: An Anthropological Approach to the Development of Bilingual Education Materials in Southwestern Alaska.* Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Cornell University.

Morrow, Phyllis (1990) Symbolic Actions, Indirect Expressions: Limits to Interpretations of Yupik Society. *Etudes/Inuit/Studies* 14(1,2): 141-158.

Nadasdy, Paul (2003) Hunters and Bureaucrats: Power, Knowledge, and Aboriginal-State Relations in the Southwest Yukon. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Nyman, Elizabeth and Jeff, Leer (1993) *Gagiwdul.at: Brought Forth to Reconfirm: The Legacy of a Taku River Tlingit Clan.* Yukon Native Language Centre: Whitehorse and Alaska Native Language Center: Fairbanks.

Patrick, Donna (2005) Language rights in Indigenous communities: The case of the Inuit of Arctic Québec. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 9(3): 369-389.

Reason, P. and H. Bradbury (2001) *Handbook of action research: Participative inquiry and practice.* London: Sage.

Romaine, Suzanne (2002) Signs of Identity, Signs of Discord: Glottal Goofs and the Green Grocer's Glottal in Debates on Hawaiian Orthography. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 12(2): 189-224.

Rushforth, F. Scott (1988) Autonomy and Community Among the Bear Lake Athapaskans. In *Native North American Interaction Patterns* (Darnell, R and M. Foster (eds). Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization. Pp. 112-142.

Rylko-Bauer, Barbara, M. Singer, and J. Van Willigen (2006). Reclaiming Applied Anthropology: It's Past, Present, and Future. *American Anthropologist* 108 (1): 178-190.

Sealaska Heritage Institute (2006) Reflections of Our Ancestors in the Faces of our Children. Program of Sealaska Heritage Institute's Celebration 2006. Juneau: Sealaska Heritage Institute.

Searle, John R. (1979) *Expression and Meaning. Cambridge*: Cambridge University Press.

Sullivan, Kathleen M. (2006) (Re) Landscaping Sovereignty in British Columbia, Canada. *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*. 29(1): 44-65.

Taku River Tlingit First Nation (1993) Constitution. Atlin, British Columbia.

Taku River Tlingit First Nation and BC Wild (1997) "Taku: Will a short-lived mining project sever the *bloodline* of the Tlingit people?" Undated Pamphlet.

Taku River Tlingit First Nation (2003) *Our Land is Our Future - Hà t_átgi hà khustiyxh*. Vision and Management Document for the Taku River Tlingit First Nation Lands and Resources Department. Atlin, British Columbia

Taku River Tlingit First Nation (2006) Elder's Resolution on Language Change. Unpublished document . Atlin, British Columbia. January 2006.

Westman, C. (2008) *Understanding Cree Religious Discourse*. Unpublished PhD Manuscript. Department of Anthropology, University of Alberta. Edmonton, Alberta.

Yukon Historical & Museum Association (1995) *The Kohklux Map*. Whitehorse: Yukon Historical & Museums Association.

Website accessed:

American Anthropological Association Code of Ethics: http://www.aaanet.org/issues/policy-advocacy/upload/ethicscode.pdf

List of Interviews

Carlick, Alice (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, BC, July 11th, 2006.

Gordon, Louise (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, BC, June 26th, 2006.

Gordon, Nicole (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, BC, September 10th, 2006.

Jack, Sandra (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, BC, September 8th, 2006.

Keleher, Randy (2006) Interview with Christine Schreyer. Atlin, BC, September 11th, 2006.

Noskey, Arthur (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. February 23rd, 2007. Loon Lake, Alberta.

Ward, Kenny (2007) Interview with Christine Schreyer. September 6th, 2007. Loon Lake, Alberta.

Appendix: "*Haa shagoon itx yaa ntoo.aat*" (Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths) – Fun and Games in Language Revitalization

Introduction

Language revitalization is not a new concept; however, despite efforts to revitalize, strengthen, and maintain endangered languages many of them are still hovering in a precarious situation. Although linguistic documentation of minority and indigenous languages has long been occurring, documentation has its limitations and it is usually when projects are the product of community support that any concrete language shift can occur. Since the 1990s, literature on efforts to cease language demise have become even more prominent (Walsh, 2005; Hinton, 2003), and much of the literature has focused on practical solutions to promote these languages. However, many of the tools and exercises used to teach these languages come from worldviews that are divergent from that of the endangered language, and hence, they are incompatible with the cultures that the languages are intrinsically linked with. Context, therefore, is an important factor in language revitalization. Another is the ability for the linguistic teaching tools to be used and understood by a wide-variety of community members – both adults and children.

According to Fishman (1991) and Krauss (1998), children should actually be the targets of efforts to revitalize languages since if children become fluent in the language it is more likely that they will pass it on to future generations. In fact, Krauss has written that it is only when children are learning the language as their first language that it is "safe" from the encroaching pressures of the

dominant languages (1998). However, it is often the case that endangered languages are taught at school or in other similar formal education settings. In these settings, the language tools used to teach children might not allow for the learning to occur in a pleasurable or socially appropriate way making it more challenging for them to learn.

In attempting to move away from these particular pitfalls of language revitalization, this paper will discuss the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's communal development and use of a place names board game, "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths"[1], that integrates place names, stories, and information about their traditional territory and the resources found there for language revitalization within their community. This paper begins by situating the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, and the status of the Tlingit language within the community. This is followed by a discussion of the importance of place names as cultural resources for the community. An outline of the development of the game, which is based on place names and stories collected on a trip around Atlin Lake, with an elder of the community, is also provided. Finally, there is a discussion of the current use of the game within the community, and the importance of fun in language learning including examples from other language learning situations.

[1] In speaking with community members about the game it was decided that an appropriate name would be one that reflects the traveling nature of the players through TRTFN territory utilizing knowledge of the land. The name "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths" was developed by Clayton Carlick.

The Taku River Tlingit First Nation

Tlingit communities are located in southwestern Alaska, southern Yukon, and in northwestern British Columbia. The Taku River Tlingit First Nation's traditional territory stretches from the Yukon into British Columbia and down the Taku River to the coast of Alaska. Although the community members once traveled more frequently through their territory, hunting and gathering, the main location for the community has become the town of Atlin, British Columbia. The town of Atlin was originally a summer camp for the Tlingit people who came to Atlin Lake to fish. The Tlingit name for Atlin is *Wéinaa,* which means alkali or where caribou used to come for salt lick in the Tlingit language (Nyman and Leer, 1993). With a gold rush in 1898, Tlingit people began to share the area with the miners.

The population of the community is approximately 372 (INAC community profiles, 2006), however, few people are fluent in the Tlingit language, and it is considered endangered by many. For example, in her 1998[2] analysis of Canada's aboriginal languages, Norris wrote that Tlingit is, "one of the smallest families, [it] has a mere 145 people in Canada whose mother tongue is that language" (Norris, 1998: 9). Similarly, Kinkade (1991) classified Tlingit in 1991 as endangered, and a Statistics Canada survey (1996) lists the average age of the population that has knowledge of Tlingit as 45.5 years of age (see Norris, 1998: 13).

[2] Although, current population data is available for the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, information regarding language statistics from the 2001 Census is not readily available, and although the Aboriginal Peoples Survey does include some information from the 2001 Census data, it is not available for TRTFN.

The state of endangerment is seen to be even more extensive in BC, than in Yukon and Alaska. According to the BC Yinka Dene Language Institute (2006), of the 575 Tlingit first language speakers alive in Canada and the USA in 1995, about 20 live in British Columbia, where the Taku River Tlingit First Nation is based. This number has since decreased as elders have passed away. Also, according to Bauman's scale of endangerment Tlingit is considered endangered as "less than 50% of the adults over 30 years of age speaks the language. A small number of less than 30 speak [the language]" (Bauman, 1980). Although TRTFN community members no longer learn Tlingit as a mother tongue, they do use Tlingit in a variety of settings including: street signs, place names, and the singing of traditional songs. The creation of directional street signs with Tlingit language, such as *Tlèyê* (Stop) and *Kagênáxh Ya_Gakhuxh* (Yield) were developed in the late 1990s, while the signs labeling the streets of the reserves were put up in 2003. The Taku River Tlingit dance group is also a newly formed group (2006), although members of the group had previously danced with other groups in Carcross, Teslin (the Tlingit communities in the Yukon), and Vancouver. The TRTFN dance group traveled to Juneau, Alaska to dance at the Sealaska Heritage Institute's Celebration in June of 2006. The community is also committed to revitalizing their language, and is currently in the process of developing language curriculum and programs, and the game "Traveling Our Ancestors' Path" is only one example of the projects being created from within the community.

The Taku River Tlingit people have historically used their land for subsistence and survival - hunting, fishing, and gathering food resources. In the summary of their Vision and Management document, *Ha Tlatgi – Ha Kustiyi* (Our Land – Our Way of Life), which was written by the lands and resources department, members of TRTFN have written:

> Through time our people have ensured that our land, with its animals, fish and plants, was sustained as a healthy place. These lands have, in turn, provided for our survival as a People and as a Nation (TRTFN, 2003:1).

It is obvious that Tlingit people have a close relationship to their land, and when the Tuslequah Chief Mining Project and Redfern Resources wanted to build a mining road through their territory and cause environmental degradation to their land, TRTFN fought back when the province of British Columbia took them to court. The case went all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada, and although they recently lost the case they have created legal precedence that will benefit other First Nations in Canada, and they continue to fight to protect their land and way of life. John Ward, Spokesperson for Taku River Tlingit First Nation during the court case[3] commented afterwards, "We will never be severed from our land and this decision doesn't change that. Taku River Tlingit Nation will continue to be the stewards of our Territory, like we always have been" (Ward, 2004).

Within the Vision and Management Document it is also explicitly written that, "land use planning and management shall be grounded in Tlingit concepts, values, and understandings, and should be infused with Tlingit language"

[3] John Ward was Spokesperson for the Taku River Tlingit during the duration of the court case: Taku River Tlingit v. British Columbia (Project Assessment Director), 2004 SCC 74

(TRTFN, 2003: 16). Also, in the section dealing with the management of Heritage and Cultural Values one of the goals of the TRTFN is to, "increase awareness and use of Tlingit language, culture and heritage values" (TRTFN, 2003: 70). The relationship between language and land is evident in this document, as well as in Tlingit place names. It was logical then to merge the two concepts in the game "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths". Due to the intimate relationship that Tlingit people have with the land, concentrating on place names as a way to learn and revitalize the Tlingit language provides context for the concepts of the Tlingit language which formalized classroom learning does not. Place names are also an important tool for learning language because as human beings we are always situated in place, and place is therefore an integral part to culture. According to Escobar, "given the primacy of embodied perception, we always find ourselves in places" (2001: 143). Thomas Thornton has described Tlingit place names in Alaska as being central to cultural education. He states:

> Place-based language education starts with the realization that indigenous peoples' most fundamental resources are traditional lands and resources from which they have derived nourishment, instruction, and inspiration for centuries, if not millennia. It recognizes that Native languages are born of intimate interaction with particular landscapes over time and that these interactions are commemorated and encapsulated in place names, place narratives, and other genres of place. (Thornton, 2003: 34)

Although Thornton's work focuses on the Tlingit of Southeast Alaska, the lifestyle of the Taku River Tlingit in Northwestern British Columbia is very similar, relying on the land as a source of nourishment for both physical and cultural needs. The place names and place narratives however, are separate for

each Tlingit community and the language that can be learnt from these will be unique for each community as well.

Tracing the ancestors' footsteps while "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths"

The idea for a board game based on community land use that would be fun for children to use in their language classes was first brought to the attention of the Taku River Tlingit in January 2005, when Christine Schreyer wrote a letter to the Council for Yukon First Nations[4] offering to volunteer to work in a First Nation community in exchange for being able to conduct doctoral research. Louise Gordon, Lands and Resources Director for TRTFN, was the individual who received the letter at TRTFN, and she was immediately interested in the idea of a board game on place names found in Taku River Tlingit Territory, specifically around Atlin Lake, as she too had had the idea of using a board game to teach language. Schreyer and Gordon began to work on ideas for the board game and its construction, and it was decided that a prototype should be complete by the summer of 2005, so that the game could be introduced to the community, and specifically to the children attending TRTFN's annual culture camp with the help of a fluent Tlingit elder, Antonia Jack, Gordon's grandmother (see Figure Three).

Tlingit people's way of life is community-based and focused on cooperation, therefore, within Tlingit culture, the group is held to be more

[4] The idea for a board game in language learning arose from discussions with Michelle Daveluy (Associate Professor in Linguistic Anthropology, Department of Anthropology, University of Alberta), Sheila Greer (consultant archaeologist, who has worked with First Nations communities in the Yukon for many years), and Christine Schreyer. Louise Gordon had also been developing the idea for a board game independently.

important than the individual, although individual contribution to the community is held with great regard. Elders are respected for the oral traditions, culture, and language that they pass on to the next generations of their family. To be an elder within the community is to be seen as being in a position of great responsibility in the community. Antonia Jack was a respected elder, who worked hard to pass down oral traditions, language, and culture to the next generation of Tlingit people, such as Louise Gordon. The oral traditions that Antonia passed on to her family required her to invest a lot of her time and energy in activities that would facilitate the passing on of her knowledge to the next generation. In particular, Naomi Mitcham, Heritage Officer for TRTFN at the time, describes how Antonia was excited to be on the trip around Atlin Lake in 1999, out on the land recording names for the younger generation to use. Mitcham records Antonia as stating, "we will trace the footsteps of the ancestors all the way around Atlin Lake" (Mitcham, 1999: 2). Antonia, at the age of 85 with her sight failing, also helped to set up and take down camp wherever they stayed around the lake (Mitcham, 1999: 33), and drummed to the song she sang in Tlingit as the group returned to town after their trip (Mitcham, 1999: 50). It is the place names that were collected as Antonia was following *her* ancestor's paths that have become the basis for the board game "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths". Antonia Jack was also very interested in teaching children, particularly of her community. In 1969, she became a child care worker at the Yukon Hall, and looked after a group of boys, who often tested her patience (Schreyer, 2005, fieldnotes). She was also actively involved in

teaching the Tlingit language, and had developed many of her own materials to help teach Tlingit in a way that was enjoyable for her students.

As a residential school survivor Antonia had at one point lost her language, and it was only through listening to her husband's family, whom she loved dearly, speak Tlingit that she was able to regain the language skills that she had lost (Schreyer, 2005, fieldnotes). Unfortunately, many of her own language teaching materials were misplaced, and so Antonia was even more interested in the game "Traveling our Ancestors' Paths", in order that her knowledge of Taku River Tlingit place names and resources be passed on to future generations. During game development in the summer of 2005, she began to teach the children the words for various types of fish species that are important Tlingit food resources. Antonia became very involved in the memory-game aspect of the fish names, and on her own expanded the activities that Christine Schreyer had originally put forward for helping the children learn the language (Schreyer, 2005, fieldnotes). Antonia was quite adamant that the children would learn the language more easily if they had to do it themselves, and if they could see the need for using the language, such as in the game play (Schreyer, 2005, fieldnotes).

The goal of the game is to be able to travel throughout the territory attempting to acquire five different resources, by rolling the die in a variety of ways, which are largely dependent on luck or chance, and return to town first. Each time a player collects a resource they must say the name of the resource in Tlingit. Also, each time a player lands on an area which is associated with a place

name they must say the place name in Tlingit. At the end of the game, when the player has returned to town they must say the names of all of the resources in Tlingit, as well as all of the place names they have landed on during the game. It is evident that the game has an underlying ludic function, as well as educational, due to the fact that players attempted to collect resources that they liked, even if another resource space was closer.

Throughout the duration of the game there is ample opportunity to add new or more complex phrases in Tlingit. In fact, during game play in the summer of 2006 some examples of additional Tlingit use were already occurring (see Figure 4). These include: counting the spaces you travel in Tlingit, as well as saying the number on the die, asking players "*Dáa sáwé?*" or "what is that?", and saying *"Aaá"* or "yes" in Tlingit when players said the words correctly. Students were also beginning to try to read the Tlingit words on the flash cards as well. Further use of Tlingit phrases could also be added to challenge the students as their skills progress.

The board game, "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths", contains a map of the traditional territory of the TRTFN, place name flash cards, resource flashcards, a die, and pieces to move around the board or the map. The original prototype for the game used six Federal Government maps, of 1: 250,000 scale (105D, 105C, 104M, 104N, 104K, and 104L, produced between 1988 and 1996 by Energy, Mines and Resources), that were merged together to form the territory of

TRTFN.[5] After the maps had been merged, the English was erased from the larger map in order that it would be easier to think in terms of the Tlingit place names and important places. The grid of the government maps was used as the grid of play for the game, and the colours of the map were also darkened so players could more clearly recognize the distinctions between land, water, mountains and ice fields and therefore orient themselves on the game board.

Since playing the game, it has become clear that a larger map is required in order to attach place names to an area. This is because Tlingit place names are often densely distributed (see Thornton, 1997). Also, as the original map included all of TRTFN's traditional territory, 18,000 square kilometers, it was a bit overwhelming for learners, and it was decided to more closely focus on the Atlin Lake area for the board game, although future projects could be developed for the other parts of the territory. Maps are often used in the Taku River Tlingit community, for travel on the land, as well as in land use planning and for mapping heritage sites and trails, and can be found covering most of the walls at the Takū River Tlingit Band Office. Children were also interested in the map, and during game play we asked the children if they recognized the map, and if they knew where we were on the map. The children were able to recognize the areas, and also pointed out other locations on the map that they recognized such as the Taku River, as well as the road to Whitehorse and *K'iyán* Mountain.[6]

---

[5] It is important to note that in order to produce a map of the entire traditional territory of the TRTFN six maps needed to be used. This illustrates the diverging views of land as held by the Canadian Government and TRTFN.

[6] K'iyán Mountain (Jubilee or Minto Mountain in English) is a marker of TRT territory to the north, and is associated with the Wolf Clan.

The place name flash cards for the game included pictures that were associated with each place, as well as the name written in Tlingit.[7] The pictures on the cards act as visual cues to the players of what the words mean. For example, Teresa Island, which is located in Atlin Lake, is known as *Jaanwu X'áat'i* (Goat Island) in Tlingit (Nyman and Leer, 1993). The flashcard for this place name has the Tlingit name on the front with a picture of a mountain goat, which are located throughout TRT territory. Another example, is *K'iyán* Mountain, which means "all the way around the bottom are Hemlock trees" in Tlingit (Nyman and Leer, 1993). The flash card for this place name has the Tlingit name on the front with a picture of the actual mountain. It was important to Gordon that the pictures were real images and not drawings or cartoon like images so that the children are able to associate what they are seeing and learning with their surrounding environment. The English translations of the place names and/or the "official" names are located on the back of the cards.

Although Tlingit place names were traditionally mnemonic devices for stories of their territory, much of this knowledge has become endangered as the Tlingit language has become endangered. Mrs. Elizabeth Nyman does include some of the stories connected to places names in her book, co-written with linguist Jeff Leer, and some elders of the community are still knowledgeable in these. However, for current generations many of the stories that are associated

[7] During the spring of 2006, TRTFN, upon the direction of the elders' council, signed a resolution that states all language material used and created by TRTFN will use the standard orthography of the coastal or Alaskan Tlingit dialect, which is widely used by the Sealaska Heritage Institute. The resolution was based on a variety of factors, which will not be discussed here (see Schreyer, C. Forthcoming. "Inscribing "New" Land: Land Claims, Language, and Social Identity). With the creation of the resolution, the orthography on the prototype flash cards required changing, and these will be checked for accuracy by people who speak and read this dialect.

with the place names are from their own personal experience rather than from historical or mythical stories. Even the children, when looking at the places on the map, were able to provide narratives connecting their own experiences in some of the places around Atlin Lake to the game. Inter-generational play, which is one of the key points of the game, allows for the other narratives that are connected to the place names to be more fully integrated into each of the player's memories.

The resource flash cards for the game also included pictures of those resources that are important to Tlingit culture. Again, these images were of real animals and plants, and included the Tlingit orthography for the resource on the front, with the English translation on the reverse. In the original prototype, used in the summer of 2005, the flash cards focused only on fish resources. This was diversified in the summer of 2006 to include both large and small animals and berries. Also, during game play it was realized that squares on the map grid of the game board should have corresponding pictures to the resource cards to indicate where players can attempt to collect the resources using the die. The location of these resource squares on the map board will be based on traditional ecological knowledge of the Taku River Tlingit people. The die used to play the game was borrowed from another contemporary game that is popular in the community, such as Monopoly and Risk. Finally, although tokens used in the prototype were also borrowed from contemporary games, it is the desire to have pieces carved or painted on wood that represent the different clan houses that are a part of Tlingit culture, including Crow houses *Kookhittaan* (crow), *Deisheetaan* (split-tail

beaver), *Léeneidí* (dog salmon), *Ishkeetaan (*frog), and Wolf house *Yan Yeidí* (wolf) .[8]

From the description of the game above, it should become clear that it is necessary for a Tlingit speaker to be present to initially teach the players pronunciation of the words and stories related to the places, as well as to aid in developing more complex use of the language. In the summer of 2005, Antonia Jack, was the teacher who helped the children to play the game. Before playing the game she reviewed the Tlingit words with the children (aged 4-10), and told them that, "they needed to learn the words so that they would be able to play the game" (Schreyer, 2005, fieldnotes). Although Antonia passed away February 3rd, 2006, before her death she continued to be interested in this project that would help younger generations of Tlingit people learn about their land and their language. The board game "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths" has been further developed by her input, and it is with great respect that the completed version will be dedicated to her as the responsibilities of teaching Tlingit ways and oral traditions shift to the next generation.

The board game was played again during development in the summer of 2006[9], although for various reasons, including the death of Mrs. Jack the previous

---

[8] Future versions of the game, as more Tlingit is learnt, could also add clan territoriality for resource acquisition, seasonality, and methods of transportation (ideas suggested by Clayton Carlick), but these aspects have not been the focus of this game.

[9] The game was played twice in 2006 at culture camp as part of the development of the game, once with the older children (aged 8-12), and once with the younger children (aged 4-7). Due to differences in learning styles, the pieces of the game were adapted to teach the different age groups. The older children, who have longer attention spans, did well with the board game style of learning. However, the younger children learnt better when using the flash cards in an active way. The game was also tested during development in 2006 by Valerie Tizya, Brenda Williams, and Christine Schreyer.

winter, no fluent speaker was present. Midori Kirby, one of the community's language instructors, who is still learning Tlingit herself, helped with basic pronunciation[10]. In Atlin, where there are few fluent speakers and it is difficult to have one present whenever people want to play the game, the necessity of a fluent speaker may be mitigated through using a CD. This is in the process of being developed from previously recorded interviews with Taku River Tlingit elders. Another option for individual learning, without a fluent speaker present, is the development of an on-line or CD-Rom based version of the game, which is also being looked at for the community. In the electronic version of the game the map of the board game will be displayed in conjunction with pictures of the places and resources from the area. There will be an interactive component that would include audio recordings of Elders, particularly Antonia Jack, saying the place names in Tlingit that are accessible when the user clicks on a particular place. Names of resources and stories about the places could also be included.

Throughout the development of the board game more and more community interest has been growing as community members learn of the game. The culture camp director, Violet Williams, was interested in the game returning to camp, despite the lack of availability of a fluent elder. It is important to note that although it is possible that the game will eventually be played in schools, it was developed at the culture camp, where other activities related to Tlingit are also taught, such as making jam, baking bannock, setting fish nets, singing, and

[10] Midori Kirby, who is originally from Japan, is learning Tlingit which is the ancestral language of her husband and children. She has been very active in creating language curriculum for the community. Lorraine Dawson, who is the niece of Antonia Jack, was also a language teacher for the culture camp. However, on the day that the game was brought to camp Lorraine was absent, but she had previously provided comments on ways to improve the game.

dancing. It is also the hope that when the game is completed that families will be interested in playing the game together, and some parents have already mentioned that they would like this to occur. And perhaps, most importantly the children were interested in the game, and wanted to know when they could play again.

Games of chance such as hand games are traditionally a part of Tlingit society, as are other forms of amusement such as singing and dancing. Stories are told through the songs, dances, and regalia that are created for these purposes, and often these stories are situated in a particular place. A game about traveling continues this aspect of Tlingit culture, and it is fitting that in order to win the game the player has to describe where they have been (in the game) and what they have done. Amusement in story telling and chance are two aspects of "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths" that allow for continuity of Tlingit traditions, and this leads to the question of how enjoyment in language learning activities may be beneficial for the learners.

Games and Enjoyment in Language Learning

Fishman (1991) has outlined eight stages of reversing language shift, and the focus of many of these stages is in having the endangered languages taught in schools (Stage 6 to 4). However, for many Native Americans residential schools and their staff were the strongest force in the near obliteration of their languages. It is highly ironic therefore, that it is through schools that many children are currently learning their native language as a second language. The emotional and physical impact of the residential school system still remains with many, however, and in order to move beyond these painful memories new methods must

be developed so that the native language can be seen in a positive light again, as something "pleasurable" to learn.

Enjoyment as a teaching method was one of the supporting ideas for the development of the game "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths". This idea has also been examined by Broner and Tarone (2001), in regards to Spanish immersion, who "propose that 'ludic' language play supports L2 acquisition as it is fun, or 'affectively charged', and hence features of L2 may become more noticeable, and therefore more memorable" (as quoted in Smith, 2006). Both times "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths" was played, the atmosphere was friendly, and children and adults alike enjoyed playing the game. Often in native language learning elders will correct or tease younger learners, and although this teasing is a culturally acceptable practice, many young learners feel embarrassed when teased, and may not want to use the language (Hill, 2001). The friendly atmosphere of the game has helped to create an environment of intergenerational learning that is highly beneficial and supportive for the new language learners. Also, with an intergenerational model of learning the newest learners (most often the children) are able to learn from speakers who are at a variety of language fluency levels. Anne Goodfellow, in her article "The Development of "New" Languages in Native American Communities", discusses the changes in younger generations' speech patterns amongst Kwak'wala speakers in British Columbia. She writes that, "educators and researchers in Native American language maintenance often comment that students are not speaking the 'real' or 'pure' language" (Goodfellow, 2003: 49). However, she argues that focusing on current

community language use as well as the 'classical' or 'real' language might be beneficial in keeping the language alive. She writes that studying this contemporary use of language, "might be fun for students…, and perhaps they'd feel less inhibited using this new language in the real world" (Goodfellow, 2003: 55, emphasis added). Other language programs have also seemed to pick up on the importance of fun in language learning.

One prominent example of fun in language learning, recently in the news, was the development of a Dakotah Scrabble game. Dakotah is the language of the Sioux people, and the game was created by Tammy DeCoteau, Director of Language Programs at the AAIA (Association on American Indian Affairs). The popularity of the game led to the creation of the first Dakotah Scrabble Tournament, which was held at the Dakotah Language Bowl at Dakota Magic Casino near Hakinson, North Dakota (www.indian-affairs.org/languagepreservation.htm). The Dakotah Language, an endangered language, was predicted to die, with its last fluent speaker, in 2025. However, Darrell DeCoteau, a school board member of the Enemy Swim Day School was quoted as saying, "with these efforts, we'll try to prolong [the use of Dakotah]" (Winnipeg Free Press, March 26th 2006). The tournament brought teams from communities in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Manitoba, creating a cross-border relationship with emphasis on the survival of the language. An official Dakotah Scrabble Dictionary has also been created, assisted by the official backing of Hasbro, the makers of Scrabble (Winnipeg Free Press Article, March 26th, 2006). The Scrabble pieces are all hand crafted by tribal members

(http://itre.cis.upenn.edu/~myl/languagelog/archives/002965.html), and use the Dakotah orthography. It was also discovered amongst all the news coverage about the Dakotah Scrabble tournament that speakers of the Carrier language in Northern British Columbia also created a Scrabble game for their language in 1994 (http://wwwitre/cis/upenn.edu/~myl/langueglog/archives/002968.html). However, it did not have the official Hasbro backing, and so less was heard about this version.

Another example of promoting language use as fun can be seen in the program "French Actif" from Campus Saint Jean at the University of Alberta. French Actif is, "a combination of upbeat language classes and activity sessions to allow people to learn basic conversational French in a fun and relaxed setting" (http://www.csj.ualberta.ca/cerf/Description.htm, emphasis added). The idea was developed by the Dean of Campus Saint Jean, Marc Arnal, and Hugh Hoyles, retired campus recreation director. Hoyles commented on the program that, "It's such a great thing to be able to speak another language and if you can make something fun, it makes the learning curve not quite as steep" (www.expressnews.ualberta.ca August 2, 2006, emphasis added). The emphasis on fun in learning is quite evident in this program.

Finally, in creating bilingual education materials, Phyllis Morrow and Chase Hensel have also created games to help teach the Yupik language in the Lower Kuskokwim School District of Bethel, Alaska (Morrow, 1987). One game in particular is similar to "Traveling Our Ancestor's Paths", and that is the game *"Pitenqnaqsaraq"* or "catching or acquiring things" in the Yupik language.

Morrow describes this game as being used to "increase students' basic understanding of the historic Yupik subsistence cycle and the contemporary resource base of their own village" (Morrow, 1987: 204). She also describes the game as focusing on the relationship between economic and cultural values (1987).

In all of these examples fun is seen to be an important part of the learning process, in both "Pitenqnaqsaraq" and "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths" in particular, the emphasis on fun is also related to the relevance of the games to cultural activities and this will be discussed further in the following section.

Relevance in Language Learning

Languages often become endangered due to the intense contact they have had with colonial languages and cultures, which may have influenced them in many ways. It is important then for any language revitalization project to use ideas and to teach words and concepts that are relevant to the culture of the endangered language. Phyllis Morrow discusses her experiences on developing bilingual education materials in her doctoral dissertation, Making the Best of Two Worlds: An Anthropological Approach to the Development of Bilingual Education Materials in Southwestern Alaska. She writes that for the materials to work the students must see the need for the language, and that "one learns a language in order to talk with people; one talks with people because there are important things to hear and to say" (Morrow, 1987: 141). These two concepts 1) need and 2) relevance are closely connected in immersion because there is the

need to learn the language in order to communicate and the focus of the learning is on what is relevant to the particular conversation.

Often curriculum for children is taken from stories and songs that children are familiar with from the dominant language, and simply translated into the endangered language without any thought as to whether the song or story is relevant to the culture. Rob Amery, who has worked on language revival for Karuna, the language of the Adelaide Plains of Australia, has commented on the problems that occur in trying to translate stories directly from one language and cultural setting to another. He has completed a translation of the children's story Tucker's Mob (Mattingley, 1992), into the Karuna language. He writes of the translation efforts that, "because the story is situated in a place with a very different climate, I had to grapple with items like banana palms and sweet potatoes for which there are obviously no Karuna equivalents in the historical sources" (Amery, 2001: 192). Not only do the lack of these words in the Karuna language cause problems for translating, but the question has to be asked if Karuna children will even be able to comprehend these items, if they have never experienced them.

George Fulford has noted similar inconsistencies in his discussion of teaching materials in a northern Cree community, in Ontario. Although this program is based on teaching English to children who are already fluent in Cree, the words that the children are being taught in English are again not concepts that are relevant to them or their cultural values. Fulford comments on the curriculum:

> What, for example, would a student in [this Cree community] make of sentences such as "Finding shrimp in his billfold upsets my father" or

> "Our pet aardvark is wild about orange sherbet" ? Surely there are better ways to teach the meaning of the words his and about. Given that shrimp and aardvarks are not a regular feature of life on James Bay, introducing such unusual words probably also introduces a degree of cognitive dissonance in students' minds, thereby interfering with their mastery of the target words. (Fulford, 1997: 6).

If students are continually asked to learn words that are not relevant to them, how can they be expected to enjoy what they are learning, and consequently take interest in the language?

The Master-Apprentice program, developed by Leanne Hinton, is one example of an immersion program that has been successful in endangered language settings. In this program, the relationship between the need for the language and the relevance of the subject matter are vital. Hinton outlines the main principles of the program as including:

1) No English is allowed: the master speaker must try to use his language at all times with the apprentice, and the apprentice must use the language to ask questions or respond to the master....
2) Learning takes place primarily in real life situations... (Hinton, 2001: 218)

The first point deals with the need to understand and use the language, while the second point illustrates the importance of relevance to the learner's daily life.

Relevance and need for language are also important, if not more so, in endangered language learning which is not immersion based. For language learners it can be hard to see the necessity or the relevance of learning lists of words that are only learnt to be tested later. Robert Leavitt, who has worked with several communities on Micmac and Maliseet programs in the Canadian

Maritimes, has similar opinions of language learning in a classroom situation. He writes that teachers should:

> think of the classroom as a place in which ….any native language is used purposefully, in context, to share ideas. There must be meaningful situations, real or modeled (the more real, the more efficient) of which talk is a natural, functional part. Drills and memorization, vocabulary practice, sentence practice, and word analysis come after, not before, talking… (Leavitt, 1987: 171).

Language learning in order to complete a task, such as playing a game, makes the learning necessary, out of interest. As well, in the game "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths" the language is relevant not only to Tlingit culture but to the experiences of the players. The children who played the game were eager to share stories of their experiences on the land such as where they had traveled, and what they had seen and experienced. They also told stories of the resources found throughout their traditional land, such as what they had eaten or cooked, and what they like or dislike. Leavitt is also a strong supporter of using examples in language learning that are based on children's experiences. He writes that:

> [Teachers] must always work from what is familiar to children. Children's sense of the people and other living creatures around them is another important component of their sense of place. Animals, for instance, appear as a favorite topic in all native language programmes. But animals are often presented or taught, inappropriately, as lists…Children need to talk about animals in context. Legends, hunting and trapping activities, preparing and cooking meat, and dealing with pets and livestock generate reasons for talking, ideas for children to express (Leavitt, 1987: 169).

When language learning is relevant to the learners, it is closely associated with their experiences, and so can be more easily called up in their memories for the future.

Conclusion

The community members of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the children included, have often had experiences that connect them to their land. Language learning situations, such as "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths", that link the land and the Tlingit language are culturally relevant to both children and adults. The game as a learning tool that models real environments and situations makes learning that much more interesting and fun for the learners, and creates an atmosphere of intergenerational learning that is important in endangered language situations. The game is also utilizing knowledge that has been collected from elders that have since passed on, and so their knowledge is still being actively used. As Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer have written about the Tlingit language in Alaska, "Preservation….is what we do to berries in jam jars and salmon in cans…Books and recordings can preserve languages, but only people and communities can keep them alive" (quoted in Walsh, 2005: 301). The board game "Traveling Our Ancestors' Paths" is one way in which TRTFN is working to keep their language alive.

References Cited

Amery, Rob (2001) Language Planning and Language Revival.*Current Issues in Language Planning*, 2, 2&3 : 141-221.

Associated Press (2006) "Scrabble to Save Sioux Tongue?", *Winnipeg Free Press,* March 26th, 2006.

Bauman, James (1980) *A Guide to Issues in Indian Language Retention.* Washington, D.C, Centre for Applied Linguistics.

British Columbia Yinka Dene Language Institute (2006) Consultation on Internet (http://www.ydli.org/bcother/bclstat.htm), March, 20, 2006.

Escobar, A. (2001) Culture Sits in Places: Reflections on Globalism and Subaltern Strategies on Localization. *Political Geography,* 20,139-74.

Fishman, Joshua (1991) *Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages.* Clevedon, UK, Multilingual Matters.

Fulford, George (1997) A Discussion Paper on the English Skills Development (ESD) Course for Grade 9 Students in Foggy Bay, Ontario. Unpublished manuscript. Winnipeg, MB, University of Winnipeg.

Goodfellow, Anne (2003) The Development of "New" Languages in Native American Communities. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 27, 2 : 41-59.

Hill, J. (2001) Dimensions of attrition in language death. In Maffi, L (ed). *On Biocultural Diversity: Linking Languages, Knowledge, and the Environment.* Washington, DC, Smithsonian Institute Press, pp. 175-189.

Hinton, L. (2003) Language revitalization. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 23: 44-57.

Hinton, L. (2001) The Master-Apprentice Language Learning Program. In Hinton, L and Hale, K (eds.), *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice.,* San Diego, Academic Press, pp. 217-226.

Kinkade, M. Dale (1990) The Decline of Native Languages in Canada. In R.H. Robins and E. M Uhlenbeck (eds.), *Endangered Languages.* Oxford, Berg Publishers Limited, pp. 157-176.

Kraus, Michael (1998) The condition of Native North American languages: the need for realistic assessment and action. *International Journal of Sociology of Language* 132: 9-21.

Leavitt, Robert (1987) Fluency is not Enough: Reassessing the Goals of Native Language Instruction. In Cowan, W. (ed.), *Papers of the Eighteenth Algonquian Conference.* Ottawa, Carleton University Press, pp. 165-172.

Mattingley, C. (1992) *Tucker's Mob.* Norwood, SA, Omnibus Books.

Morrow, Phyllis (1987) *Making the Best of Two Worlds: An Anthropological Approach to the Development of Bilingual Education Materials in Southwestern Alaska.* Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Cornell University.

Norris, Mary Jane (1998) Canada's Aboriginal Languages. *Canadian Social Trends* Winter 1998: 8-16.

Nyman, Elizabeth and Jeff Leer (1993) *Gagiwdul.at: Brought Forth to Reconfirm: The Legacy of a Taku River Tlingit Clan.* Yukon Native Language Centre, Whitehorse and Alaska Native Language Center, Fairbanks.

Schreyer, Christine (2005) Unpublished fieldnotes, Atlin British Columbia, Taku River Tlingit First Nation.

Smith, Heather (2006) Playing to Learn: A Qualitative Analysis of Bilingual Pupil-Pupil Talk During Board Game Play. *Language and Education* 20(5): 415-437.

Taku River Tlingit First Nation (2003) *Ha Tlatgi – Ha Kustiyi*, Our Land – Our Way of Life. Lands and Resources Department. Atlin, British Columbia.

Thornton, Thomas (2003) Place Names and the Language of Subsistence in Southeast Alaska. In *Maintaining the Links: Language, Identity, and the Land, Proceedings of the seventh conference presented by the Foundation for Endangered Languages.* (pp. 29--35) J. Blythe and R. McKenna Brown (eds). Bath, UK: The Foundation for Endangered Languages.

Thornton, Thomas (1997) Anthropological Studies of Native American Place Naming. *American Indian Quarterly*, Vol. 21, 2: 209-229.

Walsh, Michael (2005) Will Indigenous languages Survive? *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34: 293-315.

Ward, John (2004) Internet consultation from (http://www.titleandrightsalliance.org/TlingitStatement_2004-11-18.htm), March, 2005).

Websites referenced:

Campus St. Jean website: http://www.csj.ualberta.ca/cerf/Description.htm

Carrier Scrabble article:
http://www.itre/cis/upenn.edu/~myl/langueglog/archives/002968.html

Dakotah Scrabble article:
http://itre.cis.upenn.edu/~myl/languagelog/archives/002965.html

Department of Indian Affairs: www.indian-affairs.org/languagepreservation.htm

"French Actif" news story: www.expressnews.ualberta.ca August 2, 2006

INAC community profiles December 2006:
http://sdiprod2.inac.gc.ca/FNProfiles/FNProfiles_GeneralInformation.asp?BAND_NUMBER=501&BAND_NAME=Taku+River+Tlingit